

The Old Testament Quotation in Matthew 27,9-10: Textual Form and Context

Matthew is the only evangelist to relate, in the context of his passion narrative, that Judas repents and returns his traitor's money to the chief priests and elders, and that the priests use it to buy a field to bury strangers in (27,3-10). He has inserted the scene in his Markan framework ⁽¹⁾ immediately after the Council has sentenced Jesus to death and delivered him to Pilate (27,1-2): now that Judas perceives the fateful effect of his act (cf. 27,3), he repents. The insertion is slightly awkward in that, immediately before and after the inserted piece, the chief priests and elders are with Pilate (see 27,1-2.12), but during it they are in the temple (see 27,5).

At the end of the episode, we meet one of Matthew's fulfilment quotations, the last one to appear in his gospel. Just as the other fulfilment quotations, it is introduced by Matthew's standard but slightly flexible formula, in this case: "Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, when he said" (completely identical to 2,17). Just as the other fulfilment quotations, it is a reflection after the event, that can be omitted without a loss of flow to the story line. It reads as follows (I add a literal English translation):

- (9) καὶ ἔλαβον τὰ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια,
τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ,
(10) καὶ ἔδωκα αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν τοῦ κεραμέως,
καθὰ συνέταξέν μοι κύριος.
(9) And I took the thirty silver pieces,
the price of the one priced, whom some of the sons of Israel had priced,
(10) and I gave them for the potter's field,
as the Lord directed me.

I presuppose that instead of the 3rd pers. pl. ἔδωκαν that is printed in modern editions, we have to read the 1st pers. sg. ἔδωκα, with κ B^{2vid} W sy^{s.p.h} (and a few other witnesses)⁽²⁾. To explain the singular as an

⁽¹⁾ The two-document hypothesis will be presupposed throughout this paper.

⁽²⁾ For the various variant readings and their witnesses, see *UBSGNT*⁴. To B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort in their edition of the Greek NT of 1881, ἔδωκα was acceptable as a "marginal reading".

adjustment to *μοι* in the final line of the quotation⁽³⁾, is too simple a solution. The basic problem lies in the ambiguity of the aorist *ἔλαβον* at the beginning of the quotation: is it a 3rd pers. pl. or a 1st pers. sg.? In a linear reading of the text, whether it was practised by a lector in a scriptorium or by a scribe himself, *ἔλαβον* is very easily interpreted as a 3rd pers. pl., because it follows and interprets the plural participle *λαβόντες* in 27,6 (both verbal forms have the same object, τὰ [τριάκοντα] ἀργύρια). The verbal form at the beginning of the next clause must have the same subject; if it originally was *ἔδωκα*, the plural interpretation of *ἔλαβον* will have caused almost automatically a change into *ἔδωκαν*. The end of the quotation, however, seems to require that the verbs in the two preceding main clauses are in the singular; in that case, the quotation is also closer to its OT source, in which the prophet takes the thirty silver pieces. Because a linear reading leads more easily to an adaptation of the text to what precedes than to what follows, one should prefer in this case the singular form *ἔδωκα*⁽⁴⁾. That a plural subject in the context of a quotation performs an act that is ascribed to a singular subject in the quotation, occurs elsewhere as well (see, e.g., Acts 13,47 = Isa 49,6; 2 Cor 6,2 = Isa 49,8; Heb 13,6 = Ps 118,6).

⁽³⁾ So B.M. METZGER, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart ²1994) 55, and many commentators. Metzger also considers the possibility that “the final *nu* came into the text in order to avoid hiatus with the following vowel”. However, that scribes would avoid a hiatus at the cost of a complete change of sense, seems somewhat astonishing.

⁽⁴⁾ So also TH. ZAHN, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (KNT 1; Leipzig ²1905) 707 (with n. 75); W.C. ALLEN, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Matthew* (ICC; Edinburgh ³1912) 288; A.H. MCNEILE, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew* (London 1915) 409; E. KLOSTERMANN, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (HNT 4; Tübingen ²1927, ⁴1971) 218; A. SCHLATTER, *Der Evangelist Matthäus. Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium* (Stuttgart ⁴1957, orig. 1929) 770; A. BAUMSTARK, “Die Zitate des Mt.-Evangeliums aus dem Zwölfprophetenbuch”, *Bib* 37 (1956) 296-313, esp. 300; E. LOHMEYER, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (ed. W. SCHMAUCH) (KEK; Göttingen 1956, ⁴1967) 378; G. STRECKER, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit. Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus* (FRLANT 82; Göttingen 1962, ²1966) 81 with n. 2; R.H. GUNDRY, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (NTS 18; Leiden 1967, ²1975) 126 (also in ID., *Matthew. A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* [Grand Rapids ²1994] 557); S. LÉGASSE, *Le procès de Jésus. La Passion dans les quatre évangiles* (LD, Commentaires 3; Paris 1995) 237; P. WICK, “Judas als Prophet wider Willen. Mt 27,3-10 als Midrasch”, *TZ* 57 (2001) 26-35, esp. 30.

Insofar as the source of the quotation is detectable at all, it must be Zech 11,13. The verse reads in the Hebrew text (a literal translation follows):

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי
הַשְׁלִיכֵהוּ אֶל-הַיּוֹצֵר
אֹדֶר הַיָּקָר אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָתִי מֵעַלֵּיהֶם
וְאִקְחָה שְׁלֹשִׁים הַכֶּסֶף
וְאֲשַׁלְּךָ אֹתוֹ בֵּית יְהוָה אֶל-הַיּוֹצֵר

And the Lord said to me:
Throw it to the potter,
the splendid price by which I was priced by them.
And I took the thirty silver pieces,
and I threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter.

One textual problem has to be discussed. The OT Peshitta twice translates אֶל-הַיּוֹצֵר by *byt gz'*, “to the treasury”. These words are used elsewhere in the Syriac translation to render the Hebrew אֹצֵר (ה) בית or אֹצֵר, “treasury” (2 Kgs 12,19; Jer 38,11; Dan 1,2; Neh 10,39). So the Peshitta either presupposes a Hebrew text with אֹצֵר instead of יוֹצֵר, or interprets יוֹצֵר as אֹצֵר⁽⁵⁾. On both accounts, it represents a *lectio faciliior*: in the temple, the presence of a treasury is more likely than the presence of a potter. The reading יוֹצֵר is clearly the original one⁽⁶⁾.

According to J. Ziegler’s edition, the LXX offers the following translation (again, I add a literal translation):

καὶ εἶπε κύριος πρὸς με
κάθες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον,
Καὶ σκέψομαι εἰ δόκιμόν ἐστι ὃν τρόπον ἐδοκιμάσθην ὑπὲρ
αὐτῶν.
καὶ ἔλαβον τοὺς τριάκοντα ἀργυροῦς
καὶ ἐνέβαλον αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον.

And the Lord said to me:
Put them into the furnace,
and I will look if it is good, in the manner in which I was tested for them.
And I took the thirty silver pieces,
and I threw them into the house of the Lord, into the furnace.

⁽⁵⁾ See T. JANSMA, *Inquiry into the Hebrew Text and the Ancient Versions of Zechariah IX–XIV* (OTS 7; Leiden 1949) 105.

⁽⁶⁾ See C.C. TORREY, “The Foundry of the Second Temple at Jerusalem”, *JBL* 55 (1936) 247–260, esp. 252–255; D. BARTHÉLEMY, *Critique textuelle de l’Ancien Testament 3: Ézéchiel, Daniel et les 12 Prophètes* (OBO 50/3; Fribourg – Göttingen 1992) 991–993.

The edition of A. Rahlfs differs on one minor point. In the third line, Ziegler follows B \aleph^* and reads σκέψομαι, “I will look” (a future), whereas Rahlfs reads σκέψαι, “look” (an aorist imperative), with the large majority of textual witnesses. To my mind, Ziegler is right in preferring σκέψομαι. The words which the Lord directs to the prophet start with the aorist imperative κόθες, “put”; the reading σκέψαι is then probably an adaptation in form of the second verb in the sentence to the first one.

It is obvious that the textual form of Matthew’s quotation differs from Hebrew text and LXX⁽⁷⁾. The text of Zechariah is still recognizable in Matt 27,9, much less so in 27,10. To explain the textual form of the latter verse, many commentators follow the lead of the apparently false ascription of the quotation to Jeremiah and appeal to passages from this biblical book. They refer to Jer 18,1-2, where we meet a potter but no purchase of a field; to 19,1-13, where a potter’s bottle is mentioned and some similarities to Matt 27,3-8 are found; and to Jer 32,6-9, where we hear about the purchase of a field but not about a potter⁽⁸⁾. It seems, in any case, that in our quotation the biblical text

⁽⁷⁾ It is mostly assumed that Matthew’s quotation depends on the Hebrew text, so esp. ALLEN, *S. Matthew*, lxii, 288; K. STENDAHL, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia 1968, orig. 1954) 123; D.J. MOO, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Sheffield 1983) 198; W.D. DAVIES – D.C. ALLISON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew 3: Introduction and Commentary on Matthew XIX–XXVIII* (ICC; Edinburgh 1997) 569-571. I mention some other options: the quotation would come from an Aramaic Targum (BAUMSTARK, “Zitate”), or it would be a mix of Hebrew text and LXX (R.E. BROWN, *The Death of the Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* [AB Reference Library; London 1994] 648-650).

⁽⁸⁾ For a survey of scholarly views, see M. KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel. The Rejected-Prophet Motif in Matthaean Redaction* (JSNTSS 68; Sheffield 1993) 67 with n. 3, 69 with n. 5; Knowles himself prefers Jer 19,1-13 (see his pp. 67-77). Some additions: S. VAN TILBORG, “Matthew 27:3-10: an Intertextual Reading”, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*. Festschrift B. van Iersel (ed. S. DRAISMA) (Kampen 1989) 159-174, esp. 168-174 (Jeremiah 19, 32); A. CONARD, “The Fate of Judas. Matthew 27:3-10”, *Toronto Journal of Theology* 7 (1991) 158-168, esp. 161-162 (Jeremiah 19); D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Sacra Pagina 1; Collegeville, MN 1991) 384-387 (Jeremiah 18, 19, 32); BROWN, *Death of the Messiah*, 651-652 (Jeremiah 18, 32); L. NORTJÉ, “Matthew’s Motive for the Composition of the Story of Judas’s Suicide in Matthew 27:3-10”, *Neot* 28 (1994) 41-51, esp. 49 (Jeremiah 18, 19, 32); DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew* 3, 568-571 (Jeremiah 18, 19, 32); G. GEIGER, “Falsche Zitate bei Matthäus und Lukas”, *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (ed. C.M. TUCKETT) (BETL

is distorted to a degree that is unparalleled in the other fulfilment quotations. One obvious reason for the distortion was no doubt the need to gear the quotation to the preceding narrative.

Apart from the obscure provenance of the quotation, there is another difficulty. Not only has the context apparently influenced the quotation, it also seems that the quotation has influenced the context to a much larger extent than in the case of the other fulfilment quotations. The thirty silver pieces (Matt 26,15; 27,3), Judas' throwing them into the temple (27,5), the refusal of the chief priests to put them into the temple fund (27,6) and their buying of the potter's field (27,7): all this has been supposed to be due to influence of the quotation on the narrative, either at a pre-Matthean level or at the level of Matthew's redaction⁽⁹⁾. The other fulfilment quotations, however, have obviously been appended to existing narratives: they were added by the evangelist, who took them from a continuous Greek biblical text, determined their extent, and made occasional editorial modifications in them⁽¹⁰⁾. In some cases (1,23; 21,5), there was probably already

131; Leuven 1997) 479-486, esp. 481-482 (Jeremiah 18, 19, 32); J. MILER, *Les citations d'accomplissement dans l'Évangile de Matthieu*. Quand Dieu se rend présent en toute humanité (AnBib 140; Rome 1999) 266-271 (Jeremiah 19); WICK, "Judas als Prophet", 31 (Jeremiah 18, 19, 32). M. QUESNEL, "Les citations de Jérémie dans l'Évangile selon saint Matthieu", *EstBib* 47 (1989) 513-527, esp. 523-524, sees influence of Lam 4,1-2; KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 76, calls this a "tenuous possibility".

⁽⁹⁾ So for the pre-Matthean level: MCNEILE, *St. Matthew*, 408; G.D. KILPATRICK, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (Oxford 1946) 44-46, 81; LOHMEYER, *Matthäus*, 379-380; B. LINDARS, *New Testament Apologetic*. The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations (London 1961) 116-122; A. DESCAMPS, "Rédaction et christologie dans le récit matthéen de la Passion", *L'Évangile selon Matthieu*. Rédaction et théologie (ed. M. DIDIER) (BETL 29; Gembloux 1972) 359-415, esp. 388-390; I. BROER, "Bemerkungen zur Redaktion der Passionsgeschichte durch Matthäus", *Studien zum Matthäusevangelium*. Festschrift W. Pesch (ed. L. SCHENKE) (SBS; Stuttgart 1988) 25-46, esp. 37-42; for the Matthean level: M.D. GOULDER, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London 1974) 445-447 (except for 27:6); D.P. SENIOR, *The Passion Narrative According to Matthew*. A Redactional Study (BETL 39; Leuven 1975, ²1982) 391-396 (pp. 343-397 of this book are a reprint of Senior's article "The Fate of the Betrayer. A Redactional Study of Matthew XXVII, 3-10", *ETL* 48 [1972] 372-426; see also his "Matthew's Special Material in the Passion Story. Implications for the Evangelist's Redactional Technique and Theological Perspective", *ETL* 63 [1987] 272-294); GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 552-558; for both levels: STRECKER, *Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 78-82; BROWN, *Death of the Messiah*, 656-660. See also SCHLATTER, *Matthäus*, 768-770.

⁽¹⁰⁾ See M.J.J. MENKEN, "The Quotations from Zech 9,9 in Mt 21,5 and in Jn

some traditional link between narrative content and OT passage, but there was not yet much direct influence of the OT wording on the pre-Matthean story. Occasional influence of a quotation on the context occurs at the level of Matthew's redaction (see, e.g., the introduction of a she-donkey in addition to a colt in 21,2.7 on account of the quotation from Zech 9,9 in Matt 21,5), but it is not as extensive as it seems to be here.

The question then arises whether the fulfilment quotation in 27,9-10 is indeed a unique one. How distorted is the quotation from Zech 11,13 in fact? Which passages from Jeremiah have influenced it, and in what way? Does it come from the same type of OT text as the other fulfilment quotations? To what degree did the quotation really influence the context? At which literary level did this influence, if any, take place? Scholars have already extensively discussed these questions, but no consensus has emerged so far. To arrive at sound results, we should, first of all, analyse the textual form of the quotation as precisely as possible, to determine what kind of biblical text has been used here, and to see how apparent irregularities can be explained: by influence of the context, by influence of other biblical passages, by editorial work of the evangelist (these possible explanations are by no means mutually exclusive). It seems to me that, if one takes these factors into account, a relatively simple explanation of the textual form of the quotation is possible. Next, we should try to establish which elements of the narrative of Matt 27,3-8 are pre-Matthean. Because the narrative belongs to Matthew's *Sondergut*,

12,15", *John and the Synoptics* (ed. A. DENAUX) (BETL 101; Leuven 1992) 571-578, esp. 573-574; ID., "The Source of the Quotation from Isaiah 53:4 in Matthew 8:17", *NT* 39 (1997) 313-327; ID., "The Textual Form of the Quotation from Isaiah 8:23-9:1 in Matthew 4:15-16", *RB* 105 (1998) 526-545; ID., "Isaiah and the 'Hidden Things'. The Quotation from Psalm 78:2 in Matthew 13:35", *The Use of Sacred Books in the Ancient World* (ed. L.V. RUTGERS a.o.) (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 22; Leuven 1998) 61-77; ID., "The Quotation from Isaiah 42:1-4 in Matthew 12:18-21: Its Relation with the Matthean Context", *Bijdragen* 59 (1998) 251-266; ID., "The Quotation from Isaiah 42,1-4 in Matthew 12,18-21: Its Textual Form", *ETL* 75 (1999) 32-52; ID., "The Greek Translation of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: Matthean or pre-Matthean?", *FgNT* 12 (1999) 79-88; ID., "The Quotation from Jeremiah 31[38].15 in Matthew 2.18. A Study of Matthew's Scriptural Text", *The Old Testament in the New Testament*. Festschrift J.L. North (ed. S. MOYISE) (JSNTSS 189; Sheffield 2000) 106-125; ID., "The Textual Form of the Quotation from Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23", *NT* 43 (2001) 144-160; ID., "The Sources of the Old Testament Quotation in Matthew 2:23", *JBL* 120 (2001) 451-468.

ultimate certainty is impossible here, but a reasonable guess is possible. When we have some idea of what belongs to the traditional materials used by Matthew and what belongs to his redaction, we can determine whether the quotation has influenced the story at either the pre-Matthean or the Matthean level. When these two steps have been taken, we are in a position to decide how peculiar this quotation really is.

I. The Textual Form of the Quotation

In this section, I shall successively discuss each of the lines of the quotation, to determine the kind of biblical text used, and to explain the anomalies.

1. *Matt 27,9b (Zech 11,13d)*

The first line of Matthew's quotation is an adequate translation of the Hebrew of Zech 11,13d. Apart from the use of τὰ ἀργύρια, it also agrees with Zech 11,13d LXX, but the agreement is not very significant, because another translation is hardly possible. The LXX's ἀργυροῦς is somewhat unusual: outside Zech 11,12-13, the adjective ἀργυροῦς is not used in the LXX as a substantive to indicate pieces of money⁽¹¹⁾. Matthew's plural ἀργύρια, on the other hand, is somewhat unusual as well. It is rare in his linguistic *Umwelt*: while the singular ἀργύριον occurs abundantly, the plural does not occur in the LXX or in what remains of the other ancient Greek OT translations, nor in Philo, nor in the OT pseudepigraphs written in Greek or translated into Greek, nor in the NT outside Matthew. It occurs twice in Josephus (*Ant.* 4.267; 17.308), once only in the Apostolic Fathers (*Did.* 11,12). Matthew, however, uses it several times⁽¹²⁾. It is therefore probable that this element of the quotation comes from the evangelist. In rewriting Mark 14,11, Matthew already introduced the thirty silver pieces (see Matt 26,15). Mark has there the singular ἀργύριον; Matthew adopted this word, and put it in the plural, in agreement with his habit⁽¹³⁾. The neuter plural ὅντα in 27,10a is then also due to Matthew.

⁽¹¹⁾ In Zech 11,12, Aquila and Symmachus have adopted ἀργυροῦς from the LXX.

⁽¹²⁾ 25,27 (sg. in the parallel Luke 19,23); 26,15; 27,3.5.6.9; 28,12.15.

⁽¹³⁾ See SENIOR, *Passion Narrative*, 354; W. SCHENK, *Die Sprache des Matthäus. Die Text-Konstituenten in ihren makro- und mikrostrukturellen Relationen* (Göttingen 1987) 44-45.

2. Matt 27,9c (Zech 11,13c)

The second line of the quotation must be a rendering of at least part of Zech 11,13c. The LXX translator read אִם instead of אִדּ, and considered הִי not as an article but as an interrogative particle⁽¹⁴⁾. He further read the substantive יָקָר as an adjective and translated it by δόκιμος, and rendered the verb יָקָר by δοκιμάζειν. Finally, he possibly read על instead of מֵעַל and translated it by ὑπέρ⁽¹⁵⁾. The translation of the Hebrew root יָקָר by δόκιμος and δοκιμάζειν is not found elsewhere in the LXX; the usual Greek translation is by τιμή, τιμῶν, τίμιος and cognate words. The latter rendering appears in Aquila's translation (ὑπερμεγέθης ἡ τιμή ἣν ἐτιμήθη), and in the quotation in Matthew. On this point the translation offered in the first gospel can be either a fresh translation of the Hebrew or a revision of the LXX.

It is obvious that, in the quotation, Zech 11,13c (or at least part of it) is made into an apposition to “the thirty silver pieces” of Zech 11,13d. But what Hebrew words are exactly rendered in Matthew's text? Do the words τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο render יִקְרָתִי אֲשֶׁר הִיקָר אִדּ, or only יִקְרָתִי אֲשֶׁר הִיקָר, with omission of an equivalent of אִדּ and simultaneous introduction of τοῦ τετιμημένου without a Hebrew counterpart? The former solution implies the difficulty that τὴν τιμὴν should be considered as the rendering of אִדּ, “splendour”. Although a Greek translation of אִדּ by τιμή is maybe in itself not unthinkable, it is not attested in the LXX or in the later Greek versions⁽¹⁶⁾. This solution also implies that τοῦ τετιμημένου is the equivalent of הִיקָר, which would mean that הִיקָר was read as הִיקָר, “of the precious one”⁽¹⁷⁾. It seems to me that the other solution (that only

⁽¹⁴⁾ See JANSMA, *Inquiry*, 105.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf., e.g., Deut 24,16; Jer 18,20; Jonah 4,10.11.

⁽¹⁶⁾ One could guess that אִדּ was read as הִדּ, more or less a synonym of אִדּ, and translated a few times in the LXX by τιμή (Ps 8,6; Job 40,10; Isa 35,2; cf. Lev 19,32). This guess implies not only אִ/ה substitution (see L. PRIJS, *Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta* [Leiden 1948; repr. Hildesheim 1987] 55), but also an unusual Greek translation.

⁽¹⁷⁾ So MCNEILE, *St. Matthew*, 409; M.-J. LAGRANGE, *Évangile selon saint Matthieu* (EB; Paris 1923) 517; TORREY, “Foundry”, 251; BAUMSTARK, “Zitate”, 302; STENDAHL, *School of St. Matthew*, 125-126; GUNDRY, *Use of the OT*, 126 (also ID., *Matthew*, 557); SENIOR, *Passion Narrative*, 355; M. LIMBECK, “Das Judasbild im Neuen Testament aus christlicher Sicht”, *Heilvoller Verrat? Judas im Neuen Testament* (ed. H.L. GOLDSCHMIDT – M. LIMBECK) (Stuttgart 1976) 37-101, esp. 69; MOO, *Old Testament*, 192-193; KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 55 n. 3; DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew* 3, 569; MILER, *Citations d'accomplissement*, 260.

the equivalent of אשר יקרר is given) is less problematic and therefore preferable. Τὴν τιμὴν is then the obvious equivalent of the articular substantive הִיקָר. In this case we have to explain why τοῦ τετιμημένου was inserted. On both accounts we have to explain why the 1st pers. sg. יקרר was rendered by the 3rd pers. pl. ἐτιμήσαντο, and there is the problem of the alteration of the sequence of lines, so that in Matthew's quotation Zech 11,13c follows 11,13d.

All three questions cannot, as far as I can see, be answered as long as we limit our examination to the transmission of Zechariah's text. They can, however, if the context, within which the quotation now functions, is taken into account. In Zech 11,13, the prophet is the one who takes the money that was paid to him for his work as a shepherd in the name of God, and so basically to God himself. In the application in Matt 27,9, there is a distinction between those who take the money (the chief priests) and the one for whom the money was paid (Jesus). That makes it necessary to introduce into the quotation the person of Jesus as different from the subject of the clause ("I", identified with the chief priests). The "citor" does so by inserting τοῦ τετιμημένου between the substantive τιμή and the verb τιμᾶν, that is, he simply makes use of a root already present in his text. The distinction between those who take the money and the one for whom it was paid, also makes it necessary to change Zech 11,13c in such a way that the impression is avoided that the thirty silver pieces were paid for the chief priests; this happens by the introduction of the 3rd pers. pl. ἐτιμήσαντο in Zech 11,13c and the adaptation of the relative pronoun (to ὅν). The same effect could have been reached by the use of a 1st pers. sg., but in that case the next word of the line (מַעֲלִיחַ or its Greek equivalent) would become a problem. The distinction finally explains the inversion of the clauses. God's words to the prophet have to be eliminated because, in Matthew, the "I" of the quotation no longer coincides with the "I" of God, as is the case in Zechariah. So the relevant part of the divine speech, i.e., the words that characterize the thirty silver pieces, is added as an apposition to Zech 11,13d.

At the end of the second line of Matthew's quotation we meet the words ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, as a replacement of מַעֲלִיחַ (MT) / ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν (LXX, Aquila according to Eusebius) / ὑπ' αὐτῶν (Aquila according to ms. 86). Coming now after ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο, they function as the subject of the relative clause: "some of the sons of Israel"⁽¹⁸⁾. How should we

⁽¹⁸⁾ The construction with ἀπό replaces the partitive genitive (with suppression of τινές or something similar) and functions as a nominative, see

explain this modification of the text? One could view it as a kind of “targumization”: the subject of the sentence is made explicit⁽¹⁹⁾. Such a view, however, evokes the question why the subject has been made explicit in precisely *this* way. To my mind, an answer to this question can be found in the preceding narrative. According to Matt 27,6, the chief priests refuse to put the thirty silver pieces in the temple fund “because they are the price of blood”. This must be a reference to Deut 23,19, the prohibition to bring “the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog” into the temple⁽²⁰⁾. This prohibition is preceded, in Deut 23,18, by another prohibition that belongs together with it: there shall be no female cult prostitutes “of the daughters of Israel”, and no male cult prostitutes “of the sons of Israel”. In the latter case, the Hebrew text has מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, correctly translated in the LXX as ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ, which is the same wording as used in Matt 27,9, with the same partitive sense. One could say that Zech 11,13 and Deut 23,18-19 are analogous scriptural passages, that is, passages that have at least one word in common and preferably also have a similar content⁽²¹⁾. The common words are בֵּית יְהוָה / εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου, and the similar content is that both passages are about bringing money into the temple. Analogous passages can be connected, not only in explaining but also in rendering them, so it was legitimate to replace מַעֲלִידִים / ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν by מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל / ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ. In any case, the modification in the quotation can be explained as an adaptation to another OT passage alluded to in the context. In the law from Deuteronomy, the sons of Israel are not allowed to bring money earned by prostitution into the temple; in Matthew, the chief priests do not bring the money they paid to Judas for Jesus into the temple.

3. Matt 27,10a (Zech 11,13e)

The next line of the quotation is the equivalent of the final line of Zech 11,13: we hear what the prophet, identified with the chief priests,

BDR § 164.2; N. TURNER, *Syntax*, vol. 3 of J.H. MOULTON, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh 1963) 208-209.

⁽¹⁹⁾ See esp. BAUMSTARK, “Zitate”, 308, with examples.

⁽²⁰⁾ For the presupposed enlarged application of this law, cf. Philo, *Spec.* 1.281: “But if the gifts of one who has played the harlot are unholy, surely more unholy still are the gifts of the soul which has committed whoredom” (trans. F.H. Colson).

⁽²¹⁾ See M.J.J. MENKEN, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel*. Studies in Textual Form (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 15; Kampen 1996) 52-53 (with the literature mentioned there), 83-84, 88-89, 94-95, 117-118, 131-136, 159-160, 195, 197.

does with the money. The sequence of parts of the sentence is completely identical, but the literal agreement is very limited. If we compare Matthew's text with the LXX, it is limited at first sight to καί, αὐτά / αὐτούς and εἰς τόν. However, the words τοῦ κεραμέως can be retraced to the Hebrew text of Zech 11,13e as a rendering of הַיָּצָר. The Greek word κεραμεύς is an obvious translation of the Hebrew *qal* participle יָצַר in the sense of "potter", and is regularly found in this function in the ancient Greek OT translations⁽²²⁾. The LXX renders יָצַר in Zech 11,13 by χωνευτήριον, a "furnace" to smelt metals. Although a foundry may have belonged to the second temple and the LXX rendering (which was followed by Symmachus) may thus reflect a historical reality⁽²³⁾, some other ancient versions clearly suggest that יָצַר was understood as "potter". Aquila translates by πλάστης, which is his usual translation of יָצַר and means someone who moulds clay⁽²⁴⁾. The Vg has *statuarius* ("sculptor"), and Jerome considered *factor* ("modeller") and *figulus* ("potter") as possible translations as well (*Commentary on Zechariah*, on Zech 11,13, PL 25, 1505-1506)⁽²⁵⁾. So κεραμεύς is a simple and straightforward rendering of יָצַר, suitable in a revised LXX. The word ἔδωκα in the quotation replaces וָאֶשְׁלֵךְ (MT) / ἐνέβαλον (LXX) / ἔρριψα (Aquila, Symmachus). It can be a weak expression of the idea of "throwing", maybe instigated by הָבִי (MT) / δότε (LXX), "give", in Zech 11,12. "Give" here refers to the act of handing the thirty silver pieces to the prophet, who responds to this act by throwing them into the temple. Below we shall consider another, complementary explanation of ἔδωκα.

The word that we retain as inexplicable on the basis of Zechariah's text, is ἄγρόν. Taking into account that Matthew ascribes the quotation to Jeremiah⁽²⁶⁾, and that the preceding lines of the quotation did not contain elements from the book of Jeremiah, it seems worthwhile to turn to this biblical book when we look for an explanation of the word.

(22) See in the LXX: 1 Chr 4,23; Ps 2,9; Isa 29,16; 41,25; 45,9; Jer 18,2.3.6bis; Lam 4,2; in Symmachus: Jer 19,1. Cf. 2 Kgdms 17,28 (κέραμος).

(23) So notably TORREY, "Foundry".

(24) Cf. Aquila's (and Theodotion's) translation of Isa 64,7; Jer 18,2.4; 19,1, and see LSJ, s.v. πλάστης.

(25) TORREY, "Foundry", 256, and STENDAHL, *School of St. Matthew*, 125, are therefore wrong in asserting that the interpretation of יָצַר as "potter" is unique to Matthew.

(26) There can be no serious doubt that Ἰερεμίου in Matt 27,9 is original; all variant readings are *lectiones faciliores*, see METZGER, *Textual Commentary*, 55; MENKEN, "Isaiah and the 'Hidden Things'", 63-64.

In my view, the solution of the riddle lies in Jer 32(39),6-15. According to this passage, Jeremiah buys, at the command of the Lord, a field at Anathoth from his cousin Hanamel, for the price of seventeen shekels of silver. The act of the prophet is meant to symbolize that in the future houses, fields and vineyards shall again be bought in the land. We find the word שדה / ἄγρος in Jer 32(39),7.8.9.15.

The episode from Jeremiah shows so many similarities to Zech 11,11-13, that the two passages can be considered as analogous. The words שקל / ἰστώναι, “to weigh out”, and כסף / ἀργυροῦς, -ιον, “silver”, connect them (see Zech 11,12.13; Jer 32[39],9.10)⁽²⁷⁾, but that is not all. The most significant agreement between Zech 11,11-13 and Jer 32(39),6-15 is a clause found at the end of both Zech 11,11 and Jer 32(39),8⁽²⁸⁾. In the Hebrew text of Zechariah, it runs as follows: וידעו כי דברייהוה הוא, “and they knew that it was the word of the Lord”; the LXX translation has: καὶ γνώσονται ... διότι λόγος κυρίου ἐστίν, “and they will know ... for it is the word of the Lord”. In Jeremiah, we read in the Hebrew text: ואדע כי דברייהוה הוא, “and I knew that it was the word of the Lord”; the LXX renders correctly: καὶ ἔγνων ὅτι λόγος κυρίου ἐστίν. In the MT, the clause כי דברייהוה הוא occurs in these two verses only. In the LXX, the same is valid for the clause (δι)ὅτι λόγος κυρίου ἐστίν; there is only the minor difference of διότι and ὅτι. The analogy of Zech 11,11-13 and Jer 32(39),6-15 is obvious.

The textual analogy made it legitimate to import the word ἄγρος into the quotation from Zechariah. It seems that it was inserted between the preposition εἰς and “the potter”, with simultaneous omission of “into the house of the Lord”, possibly on account of the shorter parallel wording of v. 13b (“throw it to the potter”). An interesting point is that because of this insertion, the act of giving the thirty silver pieces to the potter, now becomes an act of paying this sum for the potter’s field. This shift is possible only when the insertion is made in a *Greek* text: διδόναι εἰς can mean both “to give to” (εἰς with an accusative replacing the dative)⁽²⁹⁾ and “to give for”⁽³⁰⁾, but in

⁽²⁷⁾ See J.W. DOEVE, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen 1953) 186; F. MANNS, “Un midrash chrétien: Le récit de la mort de Judas”, *RevScRel* 54 (1980) 197-203, esp. 203.

⁽²⁸⁾ Cf. STENDAHL, *School of St. Matthew*, 122; GOULDER, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*, 446.

⁽²⁹⁾ See W. BAUER, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur* (ed. K. and B. ALAND) (Berlin – New York 1988) s.v. εἰς 4.g.

⁽³⁰⁾ See BAUER, *Wörterbuch*, s.v. εἰς 4.d.

Hebrew, ל נתן is “to give to”, and ב נתן is “to give for”⁽³¹⁾. The process of textual change is best understood on the hypothesis of the use of a revised LXX. A reviser changed εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον of the original LXX into the more correct εἰς τὸν κεραμέα, with retention of the preposition εἰς.

The textual analogy between Zech 11,11-13 and Jer 32(39),6-15 may also have constituted a legitimation for ἔδωκα in the quotation. According to Jer 32(39),11-12, Jeremiah took (MT: קָרָא; LXX: καὶ ἔλαβον) the deed of purchase and gave it to Baruch (MT: נתן; LXX: καὶ ἔδωκα)⁽³²⁾. The act of taking occurs in (virtually) the same wording in Zech 11,13, and the change of the act of throwing into one of giving could also be legitimated by the analogy.

It will be clear that the modifications made in the hypothetical revised LXX serve the aim of making the quotation apply better to the preceding narrative. “Throwing” had to be changed into “giving” because the chief priests use the money to buy the potter’s field; they do not throw it to the potter. The phrase “into the house of the Lord” had to be eliminated because the money leaves the temple and goes to the owner of the potter’s field. The word “field” had to be introduced because the potter’s *field* was purchased.

4. Matt 27,10b

The final line of Matthew’s quotation cannot, in its literal form, be retraced to Zech 11,13. However, in this verse and its context, there are some phrases that may well have inspired the content of the final line of the quotation. The verse begins with the words: “And the Lord said to me”. At the end of Zech 11,11, there is the phrase: “It was the word of the Lord”. This formula is, as we have seen, also found in Jer 32(39),8, and Jer 32(39),6-15 contains other formulae whose content resembles that of Matt 27,10b: “the word of the Lord came to me” (v. 6), “according to the word of the Lord” (v. 8), “thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel” (vv. 14.15)⁽³³⁾. We also meet there in the LXX the verb συντάσσειν, a translation of פָּתַל piel, with as its subject not God but the prophet, who, however, speaks to Baruch the word of “the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel” (v. 13).

⁽³¹⁾ See W. BAUMGARTNER a.o., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* 2 (Leiden 1995) s.v. נתן qal 4.

⁽³²⁾ Cf. LINDARS, *NT Apologetic*, 120-121.

⁽³³⁾ I translate the MT; the LXX is sometimes slightly different.

It is impossible to connect the formula καθὼς συνέταξέν μοι κύριος to any specific OT passage. In precisely this form, the formula does not occur in the LXX. However, in the Pentateuch there are many instances of the formula without μοι, and almost always with another indirect object⁽³⁴⁾; if one allows more variation, there is a real host of parallels in the OT⁽³⁵⁾. The question is: why did the “citor” make use of this standard formula instead of simply quoting the wording he found in Zechariah or Jeremiah?

The answer to this question lies again in the preceding narrative. If Zech 11,13a had been included in the quotation, the difficulty would have arisen that in the preceding narrative God is not actively present on the stage. In that case, the quotation would suggest a direct divine command to the chief priests, and this suggestion does not agree with the narrative. On the other hand, the “citor” apparently thought it necessary to retain the element of divine command, which is so prominent in the pertinent passages of Zechariah and Jeremiah, and he does so by means of a biblical standard formula.

At the same time, the formula fits in well with Matthew’s redaction. Twice, the evangelist makes use of what has been called an *alttestamentliche Ausführungsformel*⁽³⁶⁾ when rewriting his source Mark. Whereas at the beginning of the story of the entrance into Jerusalem Mark describes in detail how the disciples execute the command of Jesus (11,4-6), Matthew relates succinctly that they did καθὼς συνέταξεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, “as Jesus had directed them” (21,6). He makes use of all but the same formula when he describes how the disciples carry out Jesus’ command to make preparations for the Passover meal (ὡς συνέταξεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, 26,19); again, Mark has a different wording (14,16). A similar formula is used in Matt 1,24, when the evangelist relates how Joseph does what the angel has said to him (ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου, “as the angel

⁽³⁴⁾ See, e.g., Exod 9,12; 36,8 (MT 39,1); 40,19; Lev 24,23; Num 8,3.22. There are no plausible reasons to accept a specific reference to Exod 9,12, as some scholars do (LINDARS, *NT Apologetic*, 121; W. VOGLER, *Judas Iskarioth. Untersuchungen zu Tradition und Redaktion von Texten des Neuen Testaments und außerkanonischen Schriften* [ThA 42; Berlin 1983] 70; SCHENK, *Sprache des Matthäus*, 186, 311; GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 558; WICK, “Judas als Prophet”, 32).

⁽³⁵⁾ See, e.g., Exod 34,4; Deut 2,37; Josh 10,40; 2 Kgdms 5,25; 2 Chr 25,4; Jer 13,5.

⁽³⁶⁾ See R. PESCH, “Eine alttestamentliche Ausführungsformel im Matthäus-Evangelium. Redaktionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Beobachtungen”, *BZ NF* 10 (1966) 220-245; 11 (1967) 79-95.

of the Lord had commanded him”). So the closing line of our quotation may well betray a Matthean interest in using an OT formula ⁽³⁷⁾.

Summarizing, we can establish the following points:

(1) The quotation was probably made from a Greek biblical text. This text may well have been a revised LXX. In this respect, the quotation does not differ from Matthew’s other fulfilment quotations.

(2) Changes have been made in both the wording of the quotation and the sequence of its lines, to attune it to the preceding narrative about the chief priests buying the potter’s field with blood money. In its present form, the quotation is a typical *ad hoc*-creation ⁽³⁸⁾.

(3) Two details of the quotation have been derived not from Zech 11,13, but from analogous OT passages. The first detail is a minor one: the expression ἀπὸ οὐδὲν Ἰσραήλ, used to make explicit the subject of ἐτιμήσαντο, comes from Deut 23,18-19. The second detail is a major one: the word ἀγρόν comes from Jer 32(39),6-15. This word is of capital importance, because buying the potter’s field constitutes the main act of both narrative and quotation. There is no reason to assume that the quotation is based on other passages from Jeremiah as well. The ascription of the quotation to Jeremiah serves to draw attention to the source of the word ἀγρόν ⁽³⁹⁾.

⁽³⁷⁾ So also W. ROTHFUCHS, *Die Erfüllungszitate des Matthäus-Evangeliums*. Eine biblisch-theologische Untersuchung (BWANT 88; Stuttgart 1969) 88 with n. 130.

⁽³⁸⁾ So also LAGRANGE, *Saint Matthieu*, 516-518; N.J. HOMMES, *Het Testimoniaboek*. Studiën over O.T. citaten in het N.T. en bij de Patres ... (Amsterdam 1935) 138-141; P. BENOIT, “La mort de Judas”, *Synoptische Studien*. Festschrift A. Wikenhauser (Munich 1953) 1-19, esp. 9-12; STENDAHL, *School of St. Matthew*, 126; SENIOR, *Passion Narrative*, 391; MOO, *Old Testament*, 207; KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel*, 54-55. According to STRECKER, *Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 78-81, the quotation is an originally independent, apocryphal prophetic word, which Matthew found in a collection of testimonies (cf. also LOHMEYER, *Matthäus*, 378-380). The difficulty of this position is to explain “how such a unique quotation could have been independent of such a unique context” (so SENIOR, *Passion Narrative*, 373).

⁽³⁹⁾ I now think that this explanation for the “false” ascription is a better one than my earlier explanation by means of the influence of Jeremiah 19 (see M.J.J. MENKEN, “The References to Jeremiah in the Gospel according to Matthew”, *ETL* 60 [1984] 5-24, esp. 10-11). Jeremiah 19 may have influenced the narrative of Matt 27,3-8, it did not influence the quotation of vv. 9-10. An apparently false ascription on the basis of a word imported from an analogous passage also occurs in the fulfilment quotation in Matt 13,35: it comes from Ps 78,2 but is ascribed to Isaiah on account of the word κερυμμένα, “hidden things” (see Isa 29,14); see MENKEN, “Isaiah and the ‘Hidden Things’”, esp. 76 (with litt. relevant to the case

(4) Matthean editorial activity can be detected in the plural ἀργύρια (+ αὐτά). The final line betrays a Matthean interest.

II. Influence of the Quotation on the Context?

We have observed above that the quotation has been adapted in several ways to the narrative that precedes it, and that it shows some traces of Matthean redaction. The obvious conclusion seems to be that the adaptation to the context is the work of the evangelist, just as the other fulfilment quotations in Matthew's gospel were added and where necessary adapted by the evangelist as the final redactor of the gospel. For the present case, however, it is often assumed, as I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, that the influence was the other way round: the quotation is supposed to have influenced the narrative, not on the small scale that is also detectable in some other quotations, but on a fairly large scale. Now it has to be said immediately that the *a priori* plausibility of such a position is not very high, not only because it would make this fulfilment quotation into an isolated case, but also because the quotation has so obviously been adapted to the story. But in theory it is possible that Zech 11,12-13 first contributed to the development of the narrative, and was added and adapted to it at a later stage, whether at the Matthean or at the pre-Matthean level. I shall try to distinguish in Matt 27,3-8 between pre-Matthean traditional materials and Matthean redaction. We can then see how far at either level there was influence from the quotation, and finally try to chart, as far as possible, how Matt 27,3-10 in its present state came into being.

1. Tradition and Redaction

In Matt 27,3-8, we meet several words and expressions which can be considered as Matthean. W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison give the following list: τότε (v. 3), ἀργύρια (vv. 3.5.6), οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ πρεσβύτεροι (v. 3), ἀναχωρεῖν (v. 5), λαμβάνειν (vv. 6.7), βάλλειν (v. 6), συμβούλιον λαμβάνειν (v. 7)⁽⁴⁰⁾. Other scholars present somewhat different and mostly longer lists⁽⁴¹⁾, but it is clear in any case that

of Matt 27,9-10). Cf. Mark 1,2-3, where a quotation from Mal 3,1 (combined with Exod 23,30) and Isa 40,3 is ascribed to Isaiah.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew 3*, 557 n. 2.

⁽⁴¹⁾ See KILPATRICK, *Origins*, 44-45; BENOIT, "Mort de Judas", 3 n. 7; STRECKER, *Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 77; S. VAN TILBORG, *The Jewish Leaders in*

Matthew's hand is discernible in the pericope, and that he connected narrative and quotation by means of the words λαβόντες τὰ ἀργύρια in v. 6. This does not mean that there is no traditional stratum in the narrative: we shall see that comparison with parallels and attention to tensions within Matthew's gospel can lead to a determination of pre-Matthean narrative elements and to a reconstruction of the basic outline of the tradition behind Matt 27,3-8. A reconstruction of its wording is, to my mind, impossible, not only on account of the evangelist's editorial work, but also because the un-Matthean vocabulary in the pericope⁽⁴²⁾ is easily explained by the subject-matter of the pericope and is therefore no indication for the use of traditional materials.

A comparison with Matthew's primary source, the gospel of Mark, reveals that the idea that Judas betrayed Jesus for money to the chief priests, belongs to tradition (Mark 14,10-11 // Matt 26,14-16).

In addition to Matt 27,3-8, there are two other stories about the fate of Judas: Acts 1,18-19 and Papias, frg. 3. Matthew's story is independent of the two others, so that common elements must belong to the tradition preceding them. At least the following elements of Matthew's story must then be traditional: the fate of Judas was an unhappy one, a piece of land was bought with the money that Judas had earned by betraying Jesus, and this piece of land was later called "field of blood" (Matthew) or "plot of blood" (Acts).

That Judas reached his unhappy end by suicide, is peculiar to Matthew. There are many indications that the early Christian picture of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas was at many points influenced by the biblical stories (and their later interpretations) of the betrayal of David by Ahithophel in 2 Samuel 15-18⁽⁴³⁾. Judas' suicide is one of these points; that is at least strongly suggested by the striking agreement between the suicide of Ahithophel as related in 2 Sam 17,23 (MT: וַיִּהְיֶה ... וַיִּתְּן; LXX: ἀπήλθεν ... καὶ ἀπήγξατο) and the suicide of Judas as related in Matt 27,5 (ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγξατο). From the circumstance that Matthew does not elsewhere in his gospel contribute to the Judas-

Matthew (Leiden 1972) 84; L. DESAUTELS, "La mort de Judas (*Mt* 27, 3-10; *Ac* 1, 15-26)", *ScEs* 38 (1986) 221-239, esp. 222 n. 5. See also the detailed discussion in SENIOR, *Passion Narrative*, 373-391.

⁽⁴²⁾ Davies and Allison mention (*Saint Matthew* 3, 557 n. 2): ἀπάγγεσθαι (v. 5), κορβανῶς (v. 6), τιμή (v. 6), ταφή (v. 7), κεραμεύς (v. 7).

⁽⁴³⁾ For details, see MENKEN, *OT Quotations in the Fourth Gospel*, 134-135 (with the literature mentioned there); DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew* 3, 565-566.

Ahithophel typology, Davies and Allison rightly conclude “that the evangelist received the tradition that Judas hanged himself” ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

The repentance of Judas is presumably also a traditional element. The fact that Judas repents is somewhat unexpected, given the way in which Matthew edits Mark’s depiction of Judas. According to Mark 14,10-11, Judas goes to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them, and although he does not ask for money, they promise to pay it to him. In Matt 26,14-16, the short scene has been slightly transformed. Judas now asks the chief priests: “What will you give me, so that I deliver him to you?” In Matthew’s view, financial profit is the motive for Judas to betray his master. In Mark’s version of the story of the Last Supper, Jesus speaks about the terrible fate of his betrayer without a direct dialogue with Judas (14,18-21). Matthew has the short scene end with such a dialogue (26,25). Judas asks: “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?”, and Jesus answers: “You have said so”. Matthew’s Judas is so impudent as to ask whether Jesus refers to him, and Jesus overtly points him out to be the betrayer. Matthew has expanded the meeting between Jesus and Judas at Jesus’ arrest, as he found it in Mark (Mark 14,45 // Matt 26,49-50). According to Matthew, Judas explicitly greets Jesus (“Hail, Rabbi”), and Jesus reacts with the words: “Friend, why are you here?” ⁽⁴⁵⁾. In this way, the insulting hypocrisy of Judas is emphasized. On the whole, Matthew tends to blacken Judas even more than Mark already did: Judas becomes a greedy, insolent hypocrite ⁽⁴⁶⁾. The positive note of the repentance of Judas is at odds with this tendency, and is best explained as a traditional element which Matthew inserted because it gave him an opportunity to inculcate the Jewish authorities. If the repentance of Judas is a traditional element, his return of the money must also belong to tradition, because it is the immediate consequence of the repentance ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew* 3, 566. According to W.C. VAN UNNIK, “The Death of Judas in Saint Matthew’s Gospel”, *ATHR.SS* 3 (1974) 44-57, esp. 49-51, the parallel between 2 Sam 17,23 and Matt 27,5 is in itself not very impressive, and Ahithophel did not betray David. One should not overlook, however, that the parallel is one out of an entire series, and that Ahithophel’s siding with Absalom and thus turning against David is tantamount to betrayal.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ This is one of the possible translations of the enigmatic phrase ἐτόλπε, ἐφ’ ὃ πάρει.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Similarly VÖGLER, *Judas Iskarioth*, 57-65; H.-J. KLAUCK, *Judas – ein Jünger des Herrn* (Quaestiones Disputatae 111; Freiburg 1987) 50-52, 59-60, 67-68.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Cf. SCHLATTER, *Matthäus*, 768: “Mit der Reue verbindet sich aber für ein jüdisches Gewissen unlöslich die Verpflichtung zur Rückgabe des mit Unrecht Erworbenen”.

Another element of the narrative that is best considered as traditional, is the name of the field the chief priests purchase: “the potter’s field”. If the name does not belong to the traditional nucleus of the narrative, it must come from the quotation; another explanation is hard to find. However, we observed above that the name has been introduced into the quotation with some “exegetical violence”: the word ἀγρός is not in Zech 11,11-13, but comes from the analogous passage Jer 32(39),6-15. The only reasonable way to account for this textual modification is to assume that the name “the potter’s field” was already part of the narrative, and that the quotation was adapted so that it contained the same name⁽⁴⁸⁾. It is very improbable that a “citorator” first contrives to create a quotation with the name “the potter’s field”, and then imports this name into the narrative.

We can now tentatively reconstruct the outline of the tradition behind Matt 27,3-8: Judas repents, returns the money he received for his betrayal of Jesus, and hangs himself, the money is used to buy the potter’s field, which is later called “field of blood”. Whether in the specific tradition behind the *Sondergut* of Matt 27,3-8 the chief priests were the receivers of the money and the buyers of the field, is not certain, but the chief priests as the ones with whom Judas had made a deal belonged in any case to the Markan tradition which Matthew used (Mark 14,10, cf. Matt 26,14). Matthew could not do otherwise than identify the money receivers and field buyers with the chief priests.

2. Influence of the quotation?

The above outline represents a minimum of pre-Matthean elements: it comprises those elements only that can be plausibly determined as pre-Matthean. It is quite possible that the narrative as found by the evangelist comprised more. The important thing, however, is that in this pre-Matthean minimum no influence of Zech 11,12-13 can be detected. The only point of contact is the word

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Similarly J.H. BERNARD, “The Death of Judas”, *The Expositor*, 6th Series 9 (1904) 422-430, esp. 423-425; ALLEN, *S. Matthew*, 288; LAGRANGE, *Saint Matthieu*, 517-518; HOMMES, *Testimoniaboeek*, 152; BENOIT, “Mort de Judas”, 9-12; STENDAHL, *School of St. Matthew*, 197; ROTHFUCHS, *Erfüllungszitate*, 86; LIMBECK, “Judasbild”, 69-71; MOO, *Old Testament*, 205-206; VOGLER, *Judas Iskarioth*, 68-70; DESAUTELS, “Mort de Judas”, 223, 228-229; J. GNILKA, *Das Matthäusevangelium 2: Kommentar zu Kap. 14,1–28,20 und Einleitungsfragen* (HTKNT 1/2; Freiburg 1988) 449; KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel*, 58-59; DAVIES – ALLISON, *Saint Matthew* 3, 570.

could also be due to the evangelist⁽⁵⁰⁾, so that there is a serious possibility that Matthew was the one who here introduced the allusion to Zech 11,13. In his final text, Judas starts to enact the role of the prophet from Zechariah, and this role is taken over by the chief priests. They prolong, so to speak, the act of Judas⁽⁵¹⁾.

Whoever assumes influence of the quotation on the words of the chief priests in Matt 27,6 (οὐκ ἔξεστιν βαλεῖν αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν κορβανᾶν, “it is not allowed to put them into the temple fund”), presupposes knowledge, on the part of Matthew or his tradition, of the reading אִצֵּר in the Hebrew text of Zech 11,13, or of the interpretation of יִצֵּר as אִצֵּר. In this view, Matthew would, so to speak, play off the two readings or interpretations against each other: the chief priests did not throw the money into the אִצֵּר, but they gave it to the יִצֵּר⁽⁵²⁾. Whether Matt 27,6b indeed presupposes this reading or interpretation, depends on the meaning of κορβανᾶς: does the word indeed refer to the temple treasure? Josephus once speaks of the ἱερὸς θησαυρός, the “sacred treasure”, which is called κορβωνᾶς (J.W. 2.175); he actually means here the gifts and money given to the temple. He twice has the transliteration κορβᾶν (κορβάν) in the sense of δῶρον, “gift” (Ag. Ap. 1.167; Ant. 4.73). In the LXX, קרבן is translated by δῶρον (see, e.g., Lev 1,2.3.10.14). Mark explains κορβᾶν as δῶρον (7,11), and “gift” is also the meaning of קרבן or קרבנא in rabbinic literature⁽⁵³⁾. So it is preferable to consider κορβανᾶς in Matt 27,6 as indicating not the

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Matthew has νόος 9x, Mark 3x, and Luke 4x. Three times, Matthew borrowed it from Mark (26,61; 27,40.51). Five occurrences are in Matthean *Sondergut* (23,16bis.17.21; 27,5). One is in Q material (23,35), and can be editorial (cf. Luke 11,51: οἶκος). Davies and Allison include the word in their list of words that are “very often editorial” (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew 1: Introduction and Commentary on Matthew I–VII* [ICC; Edinburgh 1988] 76–79); see also GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 555. In Matt 27,5, it is not quite clear whether the word refers to the temple precincts or to the sanctuary.

⁽⁵¹⁾ The quotation, however, primarily applies to the act of the chief priests. Wick’s assertion (“Judas als Prophet”, 28–30), that they enact the role of the sheep dealers of Zechariah 11, seems to be wrong as far as Matt 27,3–10 is concerned. Wick does not sufficiently take into account Matthew’s sometimes atomizing explanation of the OT text.

⁽⁵²⁾ So J. WELLHAUSEN, *Das Evangelium Matthaei* (Berlin 1904) 144–145, followed by many exegetes.

⁽⁵³⁾ See M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (Brooklyn, NY 1967; orig. 1886–1900), s.vv. (many examples are given).

temple treasure but the gifts or money given by people for sacrifices or for the temple (⁵⁴). By consequence, there is no reference to the *אוצר* of Zech 11,13, be it a variant reading or an alternative interpretation.

The fourth item to be dealt with here is the chief priests' purchase of the potter's field (27,7). I refer to what I wrote above: this element cannot come from the quotation, precisely because it was imported into the quotation with some "exegetical violence".

So far as we can detect serious influence of the quotation on the preceding narrative, it is limited to the number thirty and the wording of v. 5a. These instances are best ascribed to Matthew's redaction.

3. *The development of Matt 27,3-10*

Until now, we have detected a strong influence of the narrative on the quotation, and a superficial influence of the quotation on the narrative. The crucial question is: how obvious was it, to either Matthew or those who passed on the narrative before him, to connect this story to Zech 11,12-13? To my mind, the answer to this question has to be that it was not very obvious. In the quotation, the chief priests are equated with the prophet, just as Judas in v. 5. Now in Zechariah the prophet, and indirectly God, receives the money as wages for his work as a shepherd, whereas in Matthew, Judas receives it for his betrayal, and returns it to the chief priests who paid it to him. So the equation is, to say the least, not immediately what one would expect, and we have seen that it gave rise to textual manipulations that served to make the quotation applicable to the narrative. Zech 11,12-13 is not the first OT passage that comes to mind in connection with the handing over of Jesus by Judas to the chief priests for money. In fact, early Christian authors recognized this act in other OT passages, such as Psalm 41 (see John 13,18), Psalm 69 or 109 (see Acts 1,20). Other passages that easily come to mind are the story of Joseph being sold by his brothers (Genesis 37), the curse of whoever accepts a bribe to slay an innocent person (Deut 27,25), or, if one is looking for prophetic words, Amos 2,6 ("because they sell the righteous for silver"); 8,6 ("that we may buy the helpless for silver").

The reason to connect Zech 11,12-13 with the story was that this

(⁵⁴) See B. GÄRTNER, "The Habakkuk Commentary (DSH) and the Gospel of Matthew", *ST* 8 (1954) 1-24, esp. 18-19; GUNDRY, *Use of the OT*, 123; C. WOLFF, *Jeremia im Frühjudentum und Urchristentum* (TU 118; Berlin 1976) 160; MOO, *Old Testament*, 203-204; KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 56-58.

prophetic passage is both about money paid in connection with a shepherd authorized by God, and about a potter⁽⁵⁵⁾. These two elements were also present in the narrative: Jesus, the shepherd, was betrayed for money, and the money was used to buy the field of the potter. So the quotation was added to the narrative and manipulated, especially by the introduction of the word “field”, in order to strengthen the tenuous links between quotation and narrative. The same goal was served on a smaller scale by the introduction of some details of the OT text into the preceding gospel context.

In all probability, the evangelist was the one who made the connection. So far, we have not found indications of a pre-Matthean connection; on the contrary, we found that the slight adjustments of the context to the quotation were probably due to Matthew. The main argument for the evangelist being responsible for the connection is of course that the quotation belongs to Matthew’s series of fulfilment quotations with their standard introduction. If the other fulfilment quotations were added, at the editorial level, to existing narratives, the fulfilment quotation of 27,9-10 may be expected to have been added by Matthew as well, so long as the evidence is not otherwise. Matthew added the quotation to traditional materials that had not yet been influenced by the Zechariah passage, adapted it to the preceding narrative, especially by introducing the word “field”, and conversely made some minor modifications in the narrative context.

III. Conclusion

At the beginning of my paper, I asked the question how peculiar the quotation in Matt 27,9-10 really is. The question can now be answered. The quotation is Matthew’s most heavily edited fulfilment quotation, and it was so heavily edited because it had to be made to fit the narrative context: the purchase, by the chief priests, of the potter’s field with the money paid to Judas. On the other hand, it agrees on basic points with the other fulfilment quotations: the evangelist used the same type of biblical text and the same exegetical devices to modify it; he added the quotation to an existing narrative and slightly

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Cf. ROTHFUCHS, *Erfüllungszitate*, 87: “Danach lag für Mt das Motiv zur Anführung des ganzen Zitates in dem Geldbetrag und in dem Ackerkauf”; also ZAHN, *Matthäus*, 707-708; GUNDRY, *Use of the OT*, 202; VOGLER, *Judas Iskarioth*, 67-70.

adapted the narrative context to the quotation. It was apparently important to Matthew to show that in what happened with the money paid for the betrayal of Jesus, Scripture was fulfilled — even if it required some recasting of the biblical text⁽⁵⁶⁾.

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SUMMARY

The source of the fulfilment quotation in Matt 27,9-10 must be Zech 11,13, but the biblical text is distorted to a degree that is unparalleled in the other fulfilment quotations, and Matthew ascribes the quotation to Jeremiah. Another difficulty is that the quotation seems to have influenced the context to a much larger extent than in the case of the other fulfilment quotations. A careful analysis of the text shows that the peculiar textual form can be explained in a relatively simple way. The influence of the quotation on Matt 27,3-8 is limited, and is best ascribed to Matthew's redaction. After all, this fulfilment quotation appears to be less exceptional than it is sometimes supposed to be.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ I thank Dr. J.M. Court for checking my English idiom.

Dwelling on Visions. On the Nature of the so-called ‘Colossians Heresy’

For almost 120 years, reconstruction of the Colossian opposition has focused on sources outside the NT⁽¹⁾. Lightfoot drew on the Gnostic and Second Temple Jewish texts available at the time⁽²⁾. Dibelius’ Gnostic proposal brought Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* and the inscriptions from the Apollo sanctuary at Claros to bear on the problem⁽³⁾, while Bornkamm’s reformulation of the Gnostic proposal as Jewish Gnosticism included comparisons to the *Book of Elchasai* and the *Pseudo-Clementines*⁽⁴⁾. In keeping with this trend, the discoveries of the Nag Hammadi and Qumran texts fueled new proposals for the Colossian opponents as either Gnostic, Jewish Gnostic, or “purely” Jewish⁽⁵⁾. Recent proposals have focused on

⁽¹⁾ R.E. DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy: Wisdom in Dispute at Colossae* (JSNTSS 96; Sheffield 1994) 11, citing W. SCHECK, “Der Kolosserbrief in der neueren Forschung (1945–1985)”, *ANRW* II.25.4, 3327–3364, calls the identification of the opponents and the Christ hymn in Col 1,15–20 the “dual preoccupations” of Colossians scholars.

⁽²⁾ See J.B. LIGHTFOOT, “The Colossian Heresy”, *Conflict at Colossae. A Problem in the Interpretation of Early Christianity Illustrated by Selected Modern Studies* (ed. F.O. FRANCIS – W.A. MEEKS) (Missoula 1975) 13–59; orig. pub. *St. Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (London 1879).

⁽³⁾ See M. DIBELIUS, “The Isis Initiation in Apuleius and Related Initiatory Rites”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 61–121, trans. by the editors from Dibelius’ collected essays, *Botschaft und Geschichte* (ed. G. BORNKAMM – H. KRAFT) (Tübingen 1956).

⁽⁴⁾ DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 22–24; G. BORNKAMM, “The Heresy of Colossians”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 123–147, trans. by the editors; orig. pub. *TLZ* 73 (1948) 11–20.

⁽⁵⁾ The Gnostic camp split over the interpretation of στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου and πλήρωμα. See DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 24–25. Typical of one view is H.-M. Schenke, who, citing *Hypostasis of the Archons*, identified the elements as archons to whom the Colossian Gnostics had to endure humility (note ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ, Col 2,18) (“Der Widerstreit gnostischer und kirchlicher Christologie im Spiegel des Kolosserbriefes”, *ZTK* 61 [1964] 395–399). Cf. the opposing view of A. Moyo, who, citing *Eugnostos the Blessed* and *Sophia of Jesus Christ*, claimed that some Gnostic circles viewed the cosmic power in a positive light (“The Colossian Heresy in Light of Some Gnostic Documents from Nag Hammadi”, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 48 [1984] 30–44). E. Saunders found verification for Lightfoot’s original comparisons between the

careful re-evaluations of the existing outside evidence. First, a number of scholars have located the Colossian opponents in ascetic-mystical strands of ancient Judaism, drawing on apocalyptic and revelatory texts such as *1 Enoch* and *2 Baruch* for comparison⁽⁶⁾. Second, several scholars have placed the opponents in the context of Anatolian syncretistic religious culture and constructed a “text” of evidence from cultic practices in Asia, practices that include both Greek and Jewish influences⁽⁷⁾. Third, scholars have used texts such as Diogenes Laertes’ *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* to attach the opponents in the letter to a specific Greco-Roman philosophical school⁽⁸⁾. These different approaches, with their attendant sets of comparative texts, represent the major areas of research on the Colossian errorists⁽⁹⁾. No one course has carried the field; all five of these approaches remain well-represented in current research⁽¹⁰⁾.

Colossian “errorists” and the Essenes (“The Colossian Heresy and Qumran Theology”, *Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament* [ed. B. DANIELS and J. SUGGS] [SD 29; Salt Lake City 1967] 133-145), while E. Yamauchi saw the Colossian error as a type of Gnostic Judaism, between the Essenes and Gnostics (“Qumran and Colossae”, *BSac* 121 (1964) 141-152). S. Lyonnet attempts a “purely Jewish” formulation of the opposition (“Paul’s Adversaries in Colossae”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 147-161 [orig. pub. “L’étude du milieu littéraire et l’exégèse du Nouveau Testament”, *Bib* 37 (1956)] 1-38).

⁽⁶⁾ See F.O. FRANCIS, “Humility and Angelic Worship in Col 2:18”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 163-195 (orig. pub. *ST* 16 [1963] 109-134); and “The Background of EMBATEUEIN (Col 2:18) in Legal Papyri and Oracle Inscriptions”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 197-207; A. BANDSTRA, *The Law and the Elements of the World* (Kampen 1964); C.A. EVANS, “The Colossian Mystics”, *Bib* 63 (1982) 188-205; C. ROWLAND, “Apocalyptic Visions and the Exaltation of Christ in the Letter to the Colossians”, *JSNT* 19 (1983) 73-83; and J.R. LEVISON, “2 *Apoc. Bar.* 48:42–52:7 and the Apocalyptic Dimension of Colossians 3:1-6”, *JBL* 108 (1989) 93-108.

⁽⁷⁾ See H. HEGERMANN, *Die Vorstellung vom Schöpfungsmittler im hellenistischen Judentum und Urchristentum* (TU 82; Berlin 1961); and J. LÄHNEMANN, *Der Kolosserbrief: Komposition, Situation und Argumentation* (SNT 3; Gütersloh 1971).

⁽⁸⁾ See E. PERCY, *Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe* (Lund 1946); G.B. CAIRD, *Paul’s Letters from Prison* (NCB; Oxford 1976); and esp. E. SCHWEIZER, *The Letter to the Colossians* (Minneapolis 1982) 125-134; and “Slaves of the Elements and Worshipers of Angels: Gal 4:3, 9 and Col 2:8, 18, 20”, *JBL* 107 (1988) 455-468.

⁽⁹⁾ So identified by DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 18-40.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Thomas J. Sappington extends and refines Francis’ work on the apocalyptic-mystical construction of the opponents (*Revelation and Redemption at Colossae* [JSNTSS 53; Sheffield 1991]). DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, argues for a “distinctive blend of popular Middle Platonic, Jewish, and Christian

This paper brings a hitherto unexamined text in the history of Colossians' research in support of the apocalyptic construal of the opposition. While I draw on Francis' work, this proposal diverges from his and others' Jewish mystical-ascetic solution because the text chosen for comparison is another text from the NT, the Apocalypse of John. The proposal is that Revelation provides a social-historical, theological, and ideological context for the reconstruction of the Colossian opponents.

This proposal of a Christian context for the opponents raises two important methodological issues to be considered before delving into historical and exegetical details. First, any reconstruction of the Colossian situation must include a plausible context in which the opposing groups would actually meet⁽¹¹⁾. Christian groups and teachers would be the most likely dialogue partners in a Christian dispute over theology and praxis in the first century CE. We have far more evidence of intramural Christian polemic in first-century texts than we do that non-Christians were taking any notice of the new communities⁽¹²⁾. While there has been a strong tendency since

elements that cohere around the pursuit of wisdom" (17); while Troy W. Martin argues more pointedly that the opponents are in fact Cynic philosophers (*By Philosophy and Empty Deceit. Colossians as a Response to a Cynic Critique* [JSNTSS 118; Sheffield 1996]). Clinton E. Arnold argues for a syncretistic blend of Phrygian religious traditions and Jewish magical practices that lured the Colossians back from the "Pauline Gospel" preached by Epaphras (*The Colossian Syncretism. The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* [Grand Rapids 1996; orig. pub. *WUNT* 77; Tübingen 1995]).

⁽¹¹⁾ Arnold argues against the philosophical interpretation and others on the basis of plausibility, since Colossae was not a major cultural center, but does not consider the most plausible situation of other Christian groups (*Colossian Syncretism*, 4-5). James D. G. Dunn makes a compelling case for the Jewish context of the author's opponents, and argues against labeling the opponents as "heretics" or "errorists" (*The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids 1996] 29-35, see esp. 24), but keeps the opponents in the realm of Jewish "otherness" over against "Pauline" (for Dunn, Paul and Timothy) Christianity.

⁽¹²⁾ Evidence for first-century Gnostic communities is sketchy; see M. GOULDER, "Colossians and Barbelo", *NTS* 41 (1995) 601; and J. FOSSUM, "Colossians 1.15-18a in the Light of Jewish Mysticism and Gnosticism", *NTS* 35 (1989) 183-184, who emphasizes the common parentage of Christianity and Gnosticism. Evidence of pagan attention to Christianity begins in the second century (Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96; Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44; Suetonius, *Claudius* 25, *Nero* 6.16), which alone casts doubt on the theory that the Colossian opponents were some type of Hellenistic philosopher. Greek observers confused Christians and Jews well into the second century; see Arrian, *Epict. Diss.* 2.19.21; 4.7.6; and Lucian, *Per.* 11-13.

Lightfoot to identify the Colossian opponents as some combination of Jews, Gnostics, or Hellenistic philosophers, the most likely conversation partners within the Christian community, and hence the targets of polemic, would be other Christians ⁽¹³⁾. The NT epistles and Acts provide solid evidence not only for the constant interaction among early Christian communities but also for the regular disturbances caused when traveling Christian teachers introduced new teachings into other communities ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Second, construing the polemic in the letter as part of an intramural Christian conflict calls into question the construction of the Colossian errorists as the “other”. Casting Jewish, Gnostic, or pagan groups as the enemy within a canonized text without first considering Christian groups reads the polemical interactions of the earliest Christian communities within the narrow ideological confines of the canon. This move presupposes that Colossians expresses a “pure” form of proto-orthodox Christianity and the opponents were heterodox, if not heretical ⁽¹⁵⁾. If not Jewish or Gnostic “heretics” or “errorists”, the author’s opponents could also be “syncretistic”, again with the implication that the author, usually Paul himself, expresses “pure” Christianity. For instance Clinton Arnold, a recent proponent of a fully developed theory of “syncretistic” origins for the opponents, notes that the “designation [i.e., syncretistic] is descriptive insofar as the competing teaching represents a blending of variety of religious

⁽¹³⁾ An analogy could be drawn to the work of Martyn and Brown on the developments within the Johannine communities from the Fourth Gospel through the epistles. See J.L. MARTYN, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Nashville 1979) and R.E. BROWN, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York 1979).

⁽¹⁴⁾ E.g. Acts 6,1-6; 9,26-30; 11,19-20; 15,1-2.39; 18,24-19,1; 1 Cor 3,5-6; 2 Cor 11,4-5.22-23; Gal 2,4-14; 3 John 5-9.

⁽¹⁵⁾ See the designation of the opposition as a “heresy” (in H. HÜBNER, *An Philemon, An die Kolosser, An die Epheser* [HNT 12; Tübingen 1997] 75, or GOULDER, “Colossians and Barbelo”) or “error” (SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 150-170). See DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 25. On developments of the idea of “heresy” in early Christian NT texts, see R.M. ROYALTY, Jr., *The Streets of Heaven: The Ideology of Wealth in the Apocalypse of John* (Macon 1998) 28-34; T.W. MILLER, “Dogs, Adulterers, and the Way of Balaam: The Forms and Socio-Rhetorical Function of Polemical Rhetoric in the New Testament” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Boston MA, November, 1999) and “The Creation of Heresy: The Shape, Function, and Background of Early Christian Response to Internal Deviance, (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2000.)

traditions”⁽¹⁶⁾. But this is a description of *all* the “Christianities” of the NT, including that of the author of Colossians. Early Christianity combined elements of Second Temple Judaism (itself highly diverse and syncretistic), Greco-Roman religions, Hellenistic philosophy, and native religio-magical elements. Since “syncretistic” is equally descriptive for all the Christianities that developed in Asia Minor during the first two centuries of the common era, the term does not bring precision to delineating the opposing groups referred to in the epistle.

This paper will explore the possibility that Colossians was written by a follower of Paul after 70 CE, when John and his apocalyptic circle came to Asia Minor following the Jewish war with Rome. The debate between “Paul” (a name chosen to enhance the authority of his position) and opposing Christian prophets has a theological, moral, and an ideological dimension. The theological debate centers on the realized achievements of Christ and the relation of Christians to angels and other heavenly and earthly powers; thus, the author of Colossians argues Christology at length. The moral argument focuses on the observance of Jewish law and customs, such as Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and dietary requirements. There are important ideological underpinnings for these moral and theological issues. The author of the Apocalypse arrived in Asia after the Jewish-Roman war, “dwelling on visions” and describing heavenly angels. His prophetic authority challenged the emerging church hierarchy, whose authority derived from received Pauline tradition rather than charismatic revelation. Rev 2–3 contains significant evidence of disputes between the author John and the Asian Christian communities over matters of interpretation and praxis⁽¹⁷⁾. John’s apocalyptic visions were controversial from their introduction into Asia through their eventual reception into the canon⁽¹⁸⁾.

This proposal rests upon three assumptions about Revelation. First, the author of the Apocalypse, the seer John of Patmos, was an itinerant, charismatic prophet who came to Asia from Palestine after

⁽¹⁶⁾ ARNOLD, *Colossian Syncretism* 1, n. 1.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See Rev 2,2.5-6.14-16.20-24; 3,1.4.15-18; see also ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 28-34.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Reception problems continued well into the fourth century. See Eus. *Hist. Eccl.* 3.25; A.C. SUNDBERG, Jr., “Canon of the NT”, *IDBSup* 136-140; G. MAIER, *Die Johannesoffenbarung und die Kirche* (WUNT 25; Tübingen 1981) 1-107; and A.W. WAINRIGHT, *Mysterious Apocalypse: Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Nashville 1993) 21-31.

the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans⁽¹⁹⁾. He was the leader of a prophetic group, which probably included Christians from Palestine as well some recruited in Asia, and was known to at least the seven Asian churches addressed in Revelation and probably more⁽²⁰⁾. Second, a number of formal features and theological motifs in the Apocalypse show contact with Pauline traditions⁽²¹⁾. Third, the final text of the Apocalypse as we have it today was composed in stages, beginning perhaps as early as 65–70 CE and reaching its final form at the end of the first century⁽²²⁾. These stages are important because of the assumed date for Colossians. The author of Revelation was active as a prophet in Asia at least twenty years before the final form of the Apocalypse, perhaps edited by a disciple, circulated among Christian communities. I maintain non-Pauline authorship and a date for

⁽¹⁹⁾ See A. YARBRO COLLINS, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia 1984) 25–50; D.E. AUNE, *Revelation 1–5* (WBC 52A; Dallas 1997) lvi; and ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 15–16.

⁽²⁰⁾ See D.E. AUNE, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids 1983) 274–288, and AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, lxxv–lxxvi on prophecy in Revelation. See E. SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment* (Philadelphia 1984) 140–146; D.E. AUNE, “The Prophetic Circle of John of Patmos and the Exegesis of Revelation 22.16”, *JSNT* 37 (1989) 103–116; and AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, liv, on John as the leader or “master prophet” of a group or guild of prophets. YARBRO COLLINS, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 46, opposes this hypothesis. There were Christian communities in Tralles, Magnesia, Hierapolis, and of course Colossae, as well as the seven cities mentioned in the Apocalypse (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea). Since the choice of seven cities is clearly stylized to fit the literary structure of the Apocalypse, it is likely that John had visited other Christian communities besides the seven in Revelation 2–3.

⁽²¹⁾ See SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *Justice and Judgment*, 85–113; critiqued by R.E. Brown (*Community of the Beloved Disciple*, 6 n. 5), but the continuance of Johannine motifs in Revelation does not obviate contact with Pauline traditions.

⁽²²⁾ A fairly long tradition before the final text, thirty years or more, seems almost certain. Scholars are generally divided between a date in the 60s, under Nero, or the 90s, under Domitian (or possibly Trajan), but the main criterion has usually been the erroneous assumption of imperial persecution of the Christians under one of these emperors (see T.B. SLATER, “On the Social Setting of the Revelation to John”, *NTS* 44 [1998] 232–256, expanded in his *Christ and Community: A Socio-Historical Study of the Christology of Revelation* [JSNTSS 178; Sheffield 1999] 18–63). Aune finds evidence in the composite nature of the text for both Neronian (or even earlier) and Domitianic or Trajanic dating (*Revelation 1–5*, lvi–lxx). A.J.P. Garrow has dated Revelation to Titus’ reign (ca. 80 CE), splitting the difference between the two main views (*Revelation* [New Testament Readings; London and New York 1997] 66–79).

Colossians in the 70s–80s CE. But it is not necessary to push the letter to 95 CE in order to postulate contact between the author of Colossians and John’s apocalyptic circle⁽²³⁾. Colossians was a response to the apocalyptic prophetic *activity* of John and his followers, who were dwelling on their visions of heavenly worship within the Asian Christian communities.

I.

Literary parallels alone suggest a comparison of Colossians and Revelation. Rev 1,5 and 3,14 include phrases that almost certainly refer to either the actual Christ Hymn in Col 1,15-20 or the Christological traditions behind the hymn. The key phrases from Colossians both contain the word πρωτότοκος, “firstborn”. Christ is called πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως in Col 1,15 and ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν in Col 1,18⁽²⁴⁾. In Rev 1,5, John sends grace and peace to the seven churches of Asia “from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead [πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν], and the ruler [ἄρχων] of the kings of the earth”. Then, in the opening of the prophetic message to Laodicea in Rev 3,14, Christ announces to the Laodiceans that “these are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation [ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως]”. The diction of the phrases in Colossians and Revelation is too close and too infrequent elsewhere in the NT to allow for coincidental overlap. Πρωτότοκος occurs only in these three verses in the NT (Col 1,15,18;

⁽²³⁾ Of recent commentators, ARNOLD, *Colossian Syncretism*, favors actual Pauline authorship but a majority prefer either deuteroPauline status, perhaps by a disciple, or an edited coauthorship. See E. LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon* (Philadelphia 1971) 181; SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 15-26 (who proposes Onesimus or Timothy as possibilities); DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 35-39 (who argues consistently for Timothy, under Paul’s guidance); and HÜBNER, *Kolossier*, 9-10. See also E.R. RICHARDS, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul* [WUNT 42; Tübingen 1991]). DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 12 (see n. 4) chooses “the letter writer”; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, uses “Paul” in the “extended” sense of authorship; and MARTIN, *Philosophy and Empty Deceit*, 16-17, uses “Paul” more or less as “deuteroPauline”.

⁽²⁴⁾ R.H. Charles develops the parallels between Revelation and Colossians at some length and concludes that John had direct or indirect knowledge of Colossians itself (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John* [ICC; Edinburgh 1920, 1985] I, 94-95; see also AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, 38-39: “proof of the Christological tradition of the region”). On A. Lindemann’s proposal that the philosophy comes from within the Laodicean community, see HÜBNER, *Kolossier*, 95-97.

Rev 1,5)⁽²⁵⁾. Κτίσις is found most frequently in Paul (Rom 1,20.25; 8,19.20.21.22.39; 2 Cor 5,17; Gal 6,15), but in our two texts only in Col 1,15.23 and Rev 3,14⁽²⁶⁾.

Furthermore, Colossae was only ten miles from Laodicea and the two churches were closely associated⁽²⁷⁾. Col 4,12-16 describes close associations between the churches of the Lycus valley (see also 2,1). Epaphras (συνδοῦλος of the author, Col 1,7) has worked in the nearby churches of Hierapolis and Laodicea as well (4,13)⁽²⁸⁾. The Colossians apparently know the members of the church at Laodicea, including the woman who supports the church, Nympha (4,15)⁽²⁹⁾. The author's command to send this letter on to Laodicea to be read in Nympha's church and to read another letter to the Laodiceans (Col 4,16) implies that the issues at stake for the author in Colossae and Laodicea are the same⁽³⁰⁾.

There were obviously shared traditions among the Christian churches of the Lycus valley in Asia Minor⁽³¹⁾. The geographical proximity of Laodicea and Colossae, the references to exchange of letters, and the literary parallels suggest that the author of Revelation was aware of the Christ Hymn and other teachings of the Colossian church. R.H. Charles notes that it is significant that these literary references in Revelation occur only in the message to Laodicea, close to

⁽²⁵⁾ The ἐκ is inserted in Rev 1,5, by assimilation with Col 1,18, in the majority tradition following Andreas of Caesarea. Paul, with the exception of the bracketed instance in 1 Thess 1,10, invariably uses ἐκ νεκρῶν (see Rom 4,24; 6,9.13; 7,4; 8,11; 10,7.9; 11,15; 1 Cor 15,12.20; Gal 1,1; Phil 3,11) while Ephesians and Colossians vary (ἐκ νεκρῶν, Eph 1,20; Col 2,12; ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Eph 5,15; Col 1,18).

⁽²⁶⁾ See also Mark 10,6; 13,19; 16,15; Heb 4,13; 9,11; 1 Pet 2,13; 2 Pet 3,4.

⁽²⁷⁾ The cities were in sight of each other across the Lycus valley; see <http://persweb.wabash.edu/facstaff/royaltyr/photos/Laodicea>.

⁽²⁸⁾ See Col 4,12; Phlm 23; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 22-23; SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 37; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 63-65; HÜBNER, *Kollosser*, 49.

⁽²⁹⁾ On Nympha's role see AUNE, *Revelation 1-5*, 249-250; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 283-285.

⁽³⁰⁾ On erroneous versions of this lost letter, see *New Testament Apocrypha* (E. HENNECKE – W. SCHNEEMELCHER – R.McL. WILSON) (Philadelphia 1965) II, 128-132. While many posit Ephesians as the lost letter, Schweizer, following Knox, suggests that it could be Philemon (*Colossians*, 22-23).

⁽³¹⁾ Schüssler Fiorenza argues that the predicative statements in Rev 1,5-6 belong to early Christian baptismal tradition and that elements could have been taken from Christological traditions such as those reflected in Col 1,15-20 (*Justice and Judgment*, 70-73).

Colossae⁽³²⁾. But it is more significant that these shared phrases appear in Revelation in a polemical context. Rev 3,14-22 is one of several places in Revelation where we see evidence of deep ideological divisions within the churches of Asia. Here, this conflict can be seen in the attack on the Laodicean's wealth. While the Laodiceans claim to be rich (πλούσιος) and in need of nothing, Christ responds that they are really poor (πτωχός), blind, wretched, pitiable, and naked (Rev 3,17)⁽³³⁾. The Laodiceans probably were wealthy, most likely from commercial activity⁽³⁴⁾. The author of the Apocalypse takes a strongly negative view of the Laodicean *attitude* toward their wealth. Material wealth has led, in John's view, to complacency with their spiritual state as well, as indicated by Rev 3,15-16, in which Christ condemns the church for its lack of commitment. While the Laodiceans are not condemned for tolerating opposing teachers, as are other churches (see Rev 2,14-15.20-23), they have not in John's view committed themselves fully to the difficult struggles against the Romans, Jews, and opposing Christians that the author understands to be central to the Christian life (cf. Rev 1,9)⁽³⁵⁾. The Laodicean spiritual complacency, which was based on their material wealth, could also be construed as over-realized eschatology; we could thus read Rev 3,17 as an eschatological argument⁽³⁶⁾. Wealth and complacency have dulled the Laodicean's eschatological, as well as their ideological, edge.

Colossians expresses the realized eschatological viewpoint that John attacks in the message to Laodicea⁽³⁷⁾. The author writes that

⁽³²⁾ See CHARLES, *Revelation*, I,95.

⁽³³⁾ See ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 164-175, on the message to Laodicea; on the Laodicean reply, cf. Arrian, *Epict. Diss.* 3.7.29; Hos 12,9; Zech 11,5. Aune suggests that this is a conventional excuse (*Revelation 1-5*, 258).

⁽³⁴⁾ See H.B. SWETE, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (London³1911) 61 (who hedges somewhat on spiritual or material boasting); CHARLES, *Revelation*, I,96; R.H. MOUNCE, *The Book of Revelation* (NICNT; Grand Rapids 1977) 126; G.B. CAIRD, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine* (London²1984) 57; W.J. HARRINGTON, *Revelation* (Sacra Pagina 16; Collegeville, Minn 1993) 75.

⁽³⁵⁾ See ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 164-175.

⁽³⁶⁾ See W. BOUSSET, *Die Offenbarung Johannis* (KEK; Göttingen⁵1896) 270-271; SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *Justice and Judgment*, 119; U.B. MÜLLER, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (Gütersloh – Würzburg 1984) 136; M.E. BORING, *Revelation* (IBC.; Louisville 1989) 94-97; and AUNE, *Revelation 1-5*, 259. Cf. 1 Cor 4,8; while it is likely that the Laodicean's eschatological views differed sharply from John's, it is difficult to imagine the lukewarm Laodiceans as spiritual enthusiasts on the order of the rowdy Corinthians.

⁽³⁷⁾ This is developed in detail below, but see e.g. 1,13.21-22, 3,1.

God has made known (γνωρίσαι) the “riches [πλοῦτος] of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you” (1,27). Wealth imagery, moreover, is a feature of the letter. The author expresses his desire that everyone in Colossae, Laodicea, and “all who have not seen me face to face” (Col 2,2) would have “all the riches [πᾶν πλοῦτος] of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God’s mystery, that is, Christ himself”. In Christ, furthermore, all the “treasures” (θησαυροί) of wisdom and knowledge are hidden (Col 2,3). Finally, in the exhortation in 3,16, the author implores his audience to “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly [πλουσίως]”. Paul tends to use the language of wealth as a metaphor for divine mercy, kindness, or forgiveness⁽³⁸⁾. In Colossians, by contrast, there is a very strong connection between knowledge and wealth in the letter⁽³⁹⁾. Wealth imagery in Colossians conveys a realized eschatology, the very point attacked in the message to the Laodiceans in Rev 3,14-22. In Colossians, “wealth” of knowledge is a realized possession; God “has enabled” (ἱκανώσαντι) them to share in this inheritance of heavenly wealth and knowledge (1,12; cf. 1,5). Christ has been revealed (ἐφανερώθη, 1,26); knowledge of this mystery of God is πλοῦτος. In contrast, Revelation presents this reward entirely in the future. Christ counsels the Laodiceans to buy gold from him that they might be truly rich (πλουτήσης, Rev 3,18) and John describes a glorious vision of wealth, the opulent city of the New Jerusalem, that Christians “will inherit” (κληρονομήσει, Rev 21,7).

These parallels between Colossians and Revelation occur in a polemical context. Both texts are focused on the negative construction

⁽³⁸⁾ See Rom 2,4-5; 9,23; 10,12; 11,12; 2 Cor 4,7; 6,10; 8,2. These three 2 Corinthians examples have a Stoic character; see V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians* (ABD 32A; New York 1984) 347-348; J.J. FITZGERALD, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (SBLDS 99; Atlanta 1988) 199-201; and S.R. GARRETT, “The God of This World and the Affliction of Paul: 2 Cor 4:1-12”, *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. D.L. BALCH – E. FERGUSON – W. A. MEEKS) (Minneapolis 1990) 99-117.

⁽³⁹⁾ A wide variety of cognitive language surrounds the wealth language in these passages: γνωρίσαι (1,27); διδάσκοντες, σοφία (1,28); συνέσεως, ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ (2,2); σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως (2,3); ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ διδάσκοντες (3,16). In Paul this occurs only in Rom 11,33 and in 1 Cor 1,5, where it foreshadows 1 Cor 4,8; there, πλουτέω connotes extensive spiritual enthusiasm. The other instances of wealth language in Paul concern financial support for his ministry, the churches, or the Jerusalem church (e.g. 1 Cor 16,2; 2 Cor 9,11; Phil 4,19).

of a Christian opponent who presents a theological, moral, and ideological challenge to the author. The wealth imagery in both Colossians and the message to Laodicea points to eschatology as a major point of controversy between the author of Colossians and his apocalyptic opponents. The shared literary and theological motifs in Revelation and Colossians call for a more careful comparison of the two texts.

II.

The next task is to show correspondences between the Colossian opponents and the apocalyptic Christianity presented in Revelation. In examining the “polemical core” (Col 2,8-23), we find that there is not as much detail about what the opponents propose as about what the author disagrees with⁽⁴⁰⁾. While Col 2,8 has traditionally been the exegetical crux of the description of the opponents for scholars, interpretation of this verse has often run to atomistic analysis that ignores the rhetoric of the letter⁽⁴¹⁾. Col 2,9-15, falling *between* the two main polemical passages (2,8 and 2,16-23), is central to the debate between the author and his opponents. Furthermore, Col 1,24-2,7 sets the context for the full-scale attack in 2,8. While we should not look for the opponents behind every line, ignoring the rhetorical arrangement of the letter runs the risk of missing both the subtlety and force of the author’s polemic.

The author begins his argument against the opponents with an indirect reference in 2,4 that anticipates two major points of debate, Christology and eschatology⁽⁴²⁾. Col 2,4-5 wraps up the “autobiographical” section in Col 1,24-2,5, in which the implied author takes on the persona of Paul⁽⁴³⁾. He writes of his suffering and struggle “for your sake” (ὕπὲρ ὑμῶν, 1,24; 2,1); this “you” includes not only the Colossians but the Laodiceans and “all who have not seen me face-to-face” (Col 2,1), in other words the post-Pauline church in

⁽⁴⁰⁾ DeMaris employs too narrow a definition of the “polemical core”, esp. by eliminating Col 2,9-15 from consideration (*Colossian Controversy*, 41-45). See EVANS, “Colossian Mystics”, 194; SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 121, 134; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 144; and HÜBNER, *Kolosser*, 74-75.

⁽⁴¹⁾ See the criticisms of such approaches in *Conflict at Colossae*, 216. Schweizer is a prime example: “the concept of the elements of the universe is in any case decisive” (*Colossians*, 128).

⁽⁴²⁾ So too SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 118.

⁽⁴³⁾ The construction of the “absent author” is part of the pseudepigraphical character of this letter.

Asia (cf. εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῇ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι, 2,5). Col 2,2-3 conveys a fully realized eschatology in conjunction with a high Christology. The author hopes the recipients might have “all the riches of assured understanding” (πάν πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως) and the “knowledge” (ἐπίγνωσις) of God’s mystery, that is, Christ. Col 2,3 develops the Christology further: in Christ “all [πάντες again] treasures of wisdom and knowledge” are hidden (ἀπόκρυφοι, 2,3). This long sentence (Col 2,1-3) describes Christ’s identity as the *revealed* mystery of God (cf. 1,25-26) who provides access to God and to all wisdom and knowledge, a reference back to the fuller description of Christ in the hymn (1,15-18; cf. also 1,5.13). The author is clear that all glory and knowledge reside in Christ *and* that the mystery has been fully, not partially, revealed to the Colossians and all the “saints”.

If we read Col 1,24–2,4 as a polemical response to apocalyptic Christian prophets rather than Gnostic philosophers or Jewish syncretists, we see that the author does not want the listeners to be swayed by other Christian teachers who present a more limited view of what Christ has accomplished. The focus on the Christian community’s access to all of God’s hidden mysteries, wisdom and knowledge in Christ has a specific rhetorical purpose in the argument against this opposition. The issue at stake is not the validity of Christ as opposed to some other teaching, but rather whether Christ provides *full* access to *all* the riches (πάν πλοῦτος) and *full* knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of God’s mysteries. If all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ, have they been fully revealed or do fuller heavenly revelations await? The author emphatically connects the Christological and eschatological statements in 2,2-3 with the warning against those who “deceive by plausible arguments” (παραλογίζεται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ; note Τοῦτο λέγω, ἵνα, 2,4). The arguments of his opponents are πιθανολογία, persuasive but false, because they are arguments by other Christians.

The phrase παραλογίζεται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ in 2,4 first suggests the opponents. Before continuing with a direct assault, however, the author must lay one more piece of his foundation for the attack: the importance of received tradition. By including and commenting on the Christ Hymn in his letter (Col 1,15-20), the author privileges tradition over revealed knowledge⁽⁴⁴⁾. He even explicitly refers to the value of

⁽⁴⁴⁾ See R. BRÜCKER, “Christushymnen” oder “epedeiktische Passagen”? Studien zum Stilwechsel im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt (FRLANT 176;

tradition⁽⁴⁵⁾. First, when applying the Christ Hymn to the Colossian situation, the author warns his audience to stay within the boundaries of established faith (τῇ πίστει τεθεμελιωμένοι) and not to shift from the message of the gospel that they had heard (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὐ ἠκούσατε, 1,23). Second, and even more directly, the author cites established tradition as a warrant and guide for the Christian life (Col 2,6; note περιπατεῖτε)⁽⁴⁶⁾. The Colossians are to live their lives in Christ, “rooted and established”, “as you have received” (ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε) and “just as you were taught” (καθὼς ἐδιδάχθητε 2,6)⁽⁴⁷⁾. The connection of Col 2,6-7 to what precedes, especially 2,4-5 (note the οὖν in 2,6), and to what follows in 2,8 and 2,16-23 needs to be emphasized⁽⁴⁸⁾. Why this extensive appeal to tradition? Col 1,23 and 2,6-7 suggests that something *new* has come to the Christian churches of the Lycus Valley in Asia. Tradition functions rhetorically as an “external proof” for the audience in the face of this perceived threat⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In 2,8, the author turns directly to his Christian opponents. The key here is deciding which elements are accurate descriptions of the opponents and which are negative characterizations of the opponents by the author⁽⁵⁰⁾. Understanding the structure of the sentence is crucial

Göttingen 1997) for the notion that the key to understanding NT hymns is their rhetorical character of *epainos* or praise.

(⁴⁵) The myth of the foundation by the συνδοῦλος Epaphras (1,7) strengthens the author’s emphasis on received tradition.

(⁴⁶) See SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 123.

(⁴⁷) The verb παραλαμβάνω is a technical term for receiving tradition, corresponding to the Rabbinic *qbl* and *msr*. See 1 Cor 11,23; 15,1; Gal 1,9.12; Phil 4,9; 1 Thess 2,13; 4,1; *m. Avot* 1,1; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 92-93; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 138; and HÜBNER, *Kolosser*, 74-76.

(⁴⁸) So also SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 122; Dunn labels Col 2,6-7 the “thematic statement” of the letter (*Colossians and Philemon*, 138-143).

(⁴⁹) Rhetorical theory describes the proofs (πίστις, Lat. *probatio*) in the argument of a speech as “inartistic” or external (ἄτεχνος, Lat. *inartificialis*) and “artistic” or internal (ἐντεχνος, Lat. *artificialis*). See H. LAUSBERG, *Handbuch zum literarischen Rhetorik: Ein Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (Munich 1960) I,190-193 [§348-354]; G.A. KENNEDY, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill - London 1984) 13-19; Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.2.2 [1355B]; 3.13.4 [1414B]; Quintillian, *Inst.* 5. pref., 1.1.

(⁵⁰) See MARTIN, *Philosophy and Empty Deceit*, 27-34. Francis and Meeks summarize the interpretational problems well in reference to τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ in 2,8: “the phrase . . . may be the *quotation* of a slogan of the opponents, a *description* of their thought and practice, or a *condemnatory*, perhaps *ironic*, attribution to them of something they deliberately avoid. Is Christ said to be the head of all rule and authority because the *opponents believe the opposite* (so that

for this task, since a number of phrases are set in clear opposition to one another. I suggest the following reading:

Βλέπετε μή τί ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν
 διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης
 κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων
 κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου
 καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν

The structure and syntax of the verse reveals the extent to which it is unified as a polemical and pejorative description of the opponents, rather than an accurate restatement of their positions. The participle συλαγωγῶν, a hunting term meaning capturing or dragging away prey, introduces a negative tone that links 2,8 to the descriptions of the opponents as deceiving (2,4) and having the “appearance” of wisdom (2,22) ⁽⁵¹⁾. The author connects φιλοσοφία and κενὴ ἀπάτη as objects of διὰ ⁽⁵²⁾. The juxtaposition of the two words makes it highly unlikely that the opponents identified themselves as a philosophy. Rather, φιλοσοφία is a derogatory term equivalent to “empty deceit”. The author fears that the “hunting” opponents will take the audience captive (συλαγωγῶν) by philosophy and deceit when they stalk their prey in Colossae.

Recent studies have taken, φιλοσοφία as a self-designation of the errorists. The opponents have thus been identified as Pythagoreans, Cynics, or a syncretistic blend of Hellenistic philosophy which includes some Jewish, Gnostic and “pagan” mystery elements ⁽⁵³⁾. But there are problems with this interpretation even beyond the exegetical evidence just presented. The word φιλοσοφία had a broad enough range of meanings in this period so that use of the term does not by

the positive assertions of the writer seemingly mirror the opponents)? Or is this simply the *writer's view* in any case?” (*Conflict at Colossae*, 216, their italics).

⁽⁵¹⁾ See P. POKORNY, *Colossians* (Peabody MA 1991) 112; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 94. Dunn sees evidence here for the “powerful rhetoric” of Jewish apologists and rhetoricians in Colossae (*Colossians and Philemon*, 147), but this contradicts his earlier stance (32-33) that the Asian Jewish community was not “vigorously evangelistic”.

⁽⁵²⁾ So also DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 148.

⁽⁵³⁾ See esp. Schweizer, in which the interpretation depends entirely on his translation of στοιχεῖα (*Colossians*, 125-134); also “Slaves of the Elements”; MARTIN, *Philosophy and Empty Deceit*; and DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*. F.G. Downing critiques Martin's tendency to shape Cynicism to fit the Colossian opposition (*JBL* 117 [1998] 542-544).

necessity imply one of the philosophical schools⁽⁵⁴⁾. It is significant that the word φιλοσοφία is absent from the NT and early Christian literature before the second-century apologists, with this one exception in Col 2,8⁽⁵⁵⁾. Philosophy thus had unusual associations within the early Christian community and the author makes it clear that φιλοσοφία is something to be avoided. Furthermore, these opponents (τις) are not called philosophers. The indefinite pronoun suggests someone with regular access to the community; that is, another Christian⁽⁵⁶⁾. The evidence does not demand identification with a philosophical school but points to the use of φιλοσοφία as part of the polemical portrayal of his opponents.

In keeping with the overall tone of Col 2,8, the two κατὰ phrases that follow are derogatory descriptions of the opponents⁽⁵⁷⁾. The first phrase describes the “philosophy and empty deceit” of the author’s opponents as “human tradition” (ἡ παράδοσις τῶν ἀνθρώπων)⁽⁵⁸⁾. “Human tradition” at this point would sound a rhetorical warning bell. The characterization of the opponents’ teaching as human tradition was anticipated in the valorization of the author’s own received παράδοσις in 1,5-7.23 and 2,6-7, where he prepared for a fight against something new. Now, the phrase κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων identifies his Christian opposition as the new threat to the churches. The author then uses his received tradition as a primary theological warrant, portraying it explicitly as *divine* tradition, κατὰ Χριστόν. For the author, teaching κατὰ Χριστόν means teaching what has been received (παράλαμβάνω) rather than what comes from new prophetic revelations. Since the author has both used traditional material and

⁽⁵⁴⁾ See LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 94-95; POKORNY, *Colossians*, 112; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 147; 4 Macc 4,11; 5,4; Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 156; *Mut.* 223; Josephus, *B.J.* 2.119; *Ant.* 18.11; Stobaeus *frag.* 23.68.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Cf. φιλοσόφων, Acts 17,18; freq. in Justin, *1 Apol.* and *Dial.*; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.7 (fragments of Melito); Athenagoras, *Leg.* 2.4.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ The use is possibly ironic or contemptuous; see BDB §302.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Lightfoot and Meyer also construe καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν in opposition to both κατὰ phrases, but Martin cites a number of scholars who see this only as a negation of κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (*Philosophy and Empty Deceit*, 33 n.2). But Martin offers no justification for his “better” reading, which ignores the parallelism of the sentence. Schweizer calls the association “loose”, without further analysis (*Colossians*, 137).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ The phrase recalls Mark 7,8; Mark 7,3-13 || Matt 15,2-9. See SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 136; for Dunn, this association with Pharisaic traditions is further evidence of Jewish apologists as a source for the opposition (*Colossians and Philemon*, 148).

appealed to tradition as a warrant (Col 1,5-7.15-18.23; 2,6-7), calling his opponents' teaching *human* tradition has a particularly strong negative force. The rhetoric continues: the opponents are "puffed up with a fleshly mind" (ὕπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς, 2,18) while their regulations (ἐντάλματα) are "human teachings" (διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 2,23). This rhetoric would be a paradoxical reversal of the opponents' language. They claim to have access to heavenly revelations; the author of Colossians characterizes this as earthly teaching.

No phrase in the letter has caused more difficulty or controversy than στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ. Bandstra has divided the interpretations into three types: the "principal" interpretation, referring to principles of teaching or instruction in the root sense of στοιχος as a row, line, or series, a sense which also includes the letters of the alphabet; the "cosmological", in which the phrase is understood as referring to the elements of the material world—earth, water, air, fire; and the "personalized-cosmological", in which the phrase refers to spiritual beings⁽⁵⁹⁾. While most commentators have staked their proposal on one particular meaning, the argument here does not depend upon any one interpretation since the apocalyptic worldview in Revelation allows for any of the three possibilities⁽⁶⁰⁾. The "principal" interpretation fits well with the apocalyptic-mystical view of the Colossian opponents and also allows for a double-entendre on the numerological speculation based on letters found in Rev 13,16⁽⁶¹⁾. The sort of "wisdom" (σοφία, Rev 13,18) that produced the *gematria* for the "number of the name of the Beast" could be taken as an example of teaching according to the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ. But there are also cosmological forces at work in the Apocalypse and successions of angels between John and God in the heavenly throne room, such as the

⁽⁵⁹⁾ See BANDSTRA, *The Law and the Elements of the World*, 5-46, cited in MARTIN, *Philosophy and Empty Deceit*, 32; see also LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*. 96-98; M.J. HARRIS, *Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids 1991) 93; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 149-151.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Schweizer's interpretation is distinguished in contrast by focusing exclusively on στοιχεῖα as the "basic" elements—earth, wind, air, and fire, and sometimes the "heavens". He admits, however, in "Slaves of the Elements" that ancient authors speak of the "power" of these elements and personify them, thus opening the way for broader understanding of the στοιχεῖα as spiritual powers.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Following the "bolder hypothesis" by Goulder with regard to possible alphabetical speculations by the Gnostic community that produced the *Apocryphon of John* ("Colossians and Barbelo", 615-616).

four living creatures (Rev 4,6-8) and the multitude of angels (5,11; 7,9), suggesting a “personalized-cosmological” view. Nor does the Apocalypse prohibit the strictly cosmological interpretation. Angels in the Apocalypse control the four basic elements of the universe—earth, wind, water, and fire—as they bring about judgment upon the earth (see Rev 6,12-17; 7,1; 8,5; 12,15-16; 16,3-21). The Apocalypse reveals a true awareness of the “power of the Cosmos”, as Eduard Schweizer described the ancient sense of στοιχεῖα⁽⁶²⁾.

While it is not necessary to choose one interpretation to connect the Colossian opponents to a Christian apocalyptic group — nor should any proposal depend entirely on the construal of στοιχεῖα — it is clear that the context is polemical and the meaning, for the author, disparaging. This phrase recalls Galatians; Christians have been freed from στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ according to Paul (Gal 4,3.9). Because Paul uses the term and because the author of Colossians writes as “Paul”, the word probably has the sense of either controlling spiritualized elements or principles of religious instruction (note also πλήρωμα, Gal 4,4)⁽⁶³⁾. Given the Galatians’ usage, moreover, it is almost certainly *not* a self-designation of the opponents, any more than are “empty deceit”, “human tradition”, or “philosophy”⁽⁶⁴⁾. For the author the opponents teach an empty and deceitful philosophy that still accords power to the στοιχεῖα whereas, in his formulation of Christian παράδοσις, the Colossians have died to these elemental spirits (Col 2,20). In the rhetoric of Colossians, the “established faith” frees them from any such concerns.

So too all of Col 2,8 is a polemical description of the opponents. It is a warning (Βλέπετε μή) not to be taken captive (συλλαγωγῶν) by “empty deceit” (κενὴ ἀπάτη). Thus, it does not contain any positive descriptions of the opponents or quotations of their slogans. Rather, it consists of slanderous phrases: philosophy, empty deceit, human tradition and concern for τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ, all in contrast to the author’s traditional teaching κατὰ Χριστόν.

⁽⁶²⁾ See SCHWEIZER, “Slaves of the Elements”, 468; cf. the narrower definition in *Colossians*, 128-129.

⁽⁶³⁾ So DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 149-151, esp. 149, n. 11, and 150, n. 13; *contra* Schweizer, *Colossians*, 131-133; DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 73, 79-83.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ So also POKORNY, *Colossians and Philemon*, 114; against MARTIN, *Philosophy and Empty Deceit*, 32 n 1. Dunn notes the “doubly condemnatory” aspect of the διὰ phrase (*Colossians and Philemon*, 148).

III.

Col 2,16-23, with its fuller description of the opponents' positions, offers a better outline of the opposition than the strongly polemical 2,8. The strong *Μὴ οὖν* of 2,16 introduces a specific list of ethical teachings by "someone" (τις, cf. 2,8) that the recipients of this letter should reject. The two main characteristics of the opponents described in Col 2,16-23 are (1) the observance of some type of Jewish *halakah* (note *περιπατεῖτε*, Col 2,6, and *δογματίζεσθε*, 2,20) relating to food and the observance of the Sabbath, new moons, and festivals and (2) visionary ascent as a source of authority. Col 2,16-23 begins with the first of these two issues: "do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink" (Col 2,16). For the author, the opponents' emphasis on self-denial and asceticism is their most distinguishing characteristic. He returns to it directly twice more in the letter, in Col 2,21 and in 2,23, where he chides them for having the reputation (*λόγος*) of wisdom "in promoting self-imposed piety [*ἐθελοθρησκία*], humility [*ταπεινοφροσύνη*], and severe treatment of the body" (*φειδία σώματος*, 2,23)⁽⁶⁵⁾. This strongest characteristic for the author of Colossians corresponds to the moral code of the Apocalypse. Christ, speaking prophetically through the author John, condemns two of the churches in Asia (Pergamum and Thyatira) for tolerating the eating of idol-meat and Christian teachers who endorsed the activity (Rev 2,14.20). Christ also praises the Ephesians for rejecting the teaching of the Nicolaitans (2,6), which probably included liberal dietary rules. Those excluded from the New Jerusalem, moreover, include idolaters (*εἰδωλολάτραι*), a term which in the Apocalypse both includes those who have violated the sanction against eating meat from the pagan temple as well as people who have worshiped idols (see Rev 21,8; 22,15)⁽⁶⁶⁾. Eating meat from the temples was an important moral issue

⁽⁶⁵⁾ On this difficult verse, see LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 115 and DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 194-198 (who quotes Moule as calling it "hopelessly obscure").

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Cf. Rev 9,20-21, where *πορνεῖα* suggests that this group ate meat offered to idols. On the connections between idolatry and *πορνεῖα*, see P. BIRD, "'To Play the Harlot': An Inquiry into an Old Testament Metaphor", *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. P.L. DAY) (Minneapolis 1989) 75-94; Exod 16,36; 23,2; 32,6; Judg 2,17; 8,27.33; Deut 31,11; Isa 1,21; Jer 2,2; Ezek 16,36; 23,2; 1 Cor 10,6-8; and W.A. MEEKS, "'And Rose up to Play': Midrash and Paraenesis in 1 Corinthians 10:1-22", *JSNT* 16 (1982) 64-78. For a comparison of vice-lists in the Apocalypse, see ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 223-225.

for the author of the Apocalypse. It would thus be a source of conflict between John's apocalyptic-prophetic circle and the leaders in the Pauline churches of Asia. Since the teaching of Paul toward idol-meat was well-established (see 1 Cor 8–10; Rom 14,13–15,6), the challenge of John's visionary rhetoric condemning this practice would require a strong response.

Another aspect of the opponents' teaching, "observing festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths", could be understood as a concern for calendar and astronomical phenomenon⁽⁶⁷⁾. John and his community likely observed the Sabbath. The phrase ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ (Rev 1,10) does not preclude the observance of the Sabbath but could be used to draw a distinction between the Sabbath and "the Lord's Day"⁽⁶⁸⁾. Furthermore, the attack on "so-called Jews" and the "synagogue of Satan" in Rev 2,9 and 3,9 indicates a struggle within the synagogue with Jewish groups and suggests a concern for Sabbath observance in John's community⁽⁶⁹⁾. The Apocalypse, furthermore, is totally imbued with astronomical and astrological imagery⁽⁷⁰⁾. Many visions in

⁽⁶⁷⁾ The problematic word στοιχεῖα (Col 2,8,20), moreover, could refer to the stars and the 12 signs of the zodiac. See Ps.-Callisthenes 1.1.3 and 1.12.1; Diog. Laert. 6.102; and the *Paris Magical Papyrus* 4.1303; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 97; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 149. T.C.G. Thornton argues the astronomical interpretation of στοιχεῖα in both Colossians and Galatians, maintaining that τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, for the author of Colossians, represents "pagan elements from which Christians are now free" ("Jewish New Moon Festivals, Galatians 4:3-11 and Colossians 2:16", *JTS* 40 [1989] 97-100). T. Martin contends that the Colossian list is Jewish while the Galatian list could be Jewish or pagan ("Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-Keeping Schemes in Gal 4.10 and Col 2.16", *NTS* 42 [1996] 105-119).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ See AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, 83-84 on the phrase; Ignatius, *Magn.* 9.1, uses κυριακή in opposition to σαββατίζοντες.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ See ROYALTY, *Streets of Heaven*, 161.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Astrological imagery is noted by most commentators, but the function of this imagery in the text remains the subject of debate. Significant twentieth century astrological readings of Revelation include F. BOLL, *Auf der Offenbarung Johannis: Hellenistische Studien zum Weltbild der Apokalypse* (Berlin 1914); A. FARRER, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Oxford 1964); B.J. MALINA, *On the Genre and Message of Revelation. Star Visions and Sky Journeys* (Peabody, MA 1995), who suggests that John was an astral prophet who saw his visions in the sky and, with J.J. PILCH, *Social-Science Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Minneapolis 2000); and Jacques M. Chevalier, who characterizes Revelation as a script setting eschatological views of time explicitly against pagan astral views (*A Postmodern Revelation. Signs of Astrology and the Apocalypse* [Toronto 1997]).

Revelation, including some of the most central, have explicit astronomical imagery. Revelation contains 30 occurrences of ἥλιος, σελήνη, and ἀστήρ alone, while these words are virtually absent from the Pauline and deutero-Pauline corpus ⁽⁷¹⁾. For instance, Jesus appears to John on Patmos holding seven stars in his right hand (ἀστέρας ἑπτα, Rev 1,16)⁽⁷²⁾. Or again, John sees “in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rev 12,1)⁽⁷³⁾. The twelve jewels on the foundations of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21,19-20) may have some connection to the signs of the zodiac⁽⁷⁴⁾. All of this imagery is applied in a positive manner to Christian figures and symbols (Jesus, the Woman in Heaven, the New Jerusalem).

Col 2,16, mentioning both food regulations and the Sabbath, indicates some type of a Jewish context for the author’s opponents ⁽⁷⁵⁾. As noted above, there have been a number of Jewish proposals for the opponents. The definition of Judaism in the late first century could include any one of the many varieties of Judaism, as well as

⁽⁷¹⁾ See Rev 1,16,20; 2,1,28; 3,1; 6,12,13; 7,2,16; 8,10,11,12; 9,1,2; 10,1; 12,1,4; 16,8,12; 21,23; 22,5,16; cf. 1 Cor 15,41 and Eph 4,26.

⁽⁷²⁾ See Aune for three different interpretations of this image, all of which have astrological implications (*Revelation 1–5*, 97-98).

⁽⁷³⁾ See CHARLES, *Revelation*, I, 310-316; D. AUNE, *Revelation 6–16* (WBC 52B; Nashville 1998) 680. The origins of the imagery in Revelation 12 probably are in Babylonian and Greek myths; the twelve stars represent the twelve signs of the zodiac.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ See A. FARRER, *A Rebirth of Images*. The Making of St John’s Apocalypse (Westminster 1949) 216-244. Charles claims that the gems are a *reversed* list of the signs of the zodiac and therefore are meant to be a repudiation of astronomical speculation (*Revelation*, II, 165-169), but see T.F. GLASSON, “The Order of Jewels in Revelation XXI, 19-20: A Theory Eliminated”, *JTS* 26 (1975) 95-100. The association with the twelve tribes of Israel and the gems in the High Priest’s pectoral is certainly primary; see D.E. AUNE, *Revelation 17–22* (WBC 52C; Nashville 1998) 1156.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ See LIGHTFOOT, “The Colossians Heresy”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 13. The phrase “festival, new moon, sabbath” appears in 1 Sam 20; LXX Hos 2,13; Ezek 45,17; 1 Chron 23,31; 2 Chron 2,3; 31,13. See LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 115; DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 56-58. Both Arnold and Dunn make the “Jewishness” of the opponents a major point in their reconstructions. For Dunn, this is a “common sense” approach based on the evidence of significant Jewish communities in Asia (*Colossians and Philemon*, 24-33; see also “The Colossians Philosophy. A Confident Jewish Apologia” [*Bib* 76 (1995) 153-181]). Arnold’s association of Judaism with angel worship is another example of a scholar “othering” the opponents while keeping Pauline Christianity pure and undefiled; cf. Schweitzer’s “Jewish Pythagoreanism”.

Christianity⁽⁷⁶⁾. The author of Colossians never directly calls his opponents Jews or accuses them of “judaizing” (cf. Gal 2,14). Nevertheless, a close relationship with Judaism is implied; perhaps the opponents claim the title of “the true Jews” or at least consider their beliefs to be the fulfillment of the promises to the Jewish people. This latter possibility corresponds to the identities evoked by the author of the Apocalypse. The messages to Smyrna and Philadelphia portray an intense struggle with other groups over the rights to the title of “Jews”⁽⁷⁷⁾. Here, Christ calls these opponents “so-called Jews” and “the synagogue of Satan” (Rev 2,9; 3,9). The derogatory and polemical description of these other, “false”, Jewish groups shows that John and his followers claimed the titles of the “true Jews” and “the true synagogue” for themselves. John laid explicit claim to the symbols of Jewish identity. Since the author of Colossians opposes such a group, we have another correspondence between the opponents in Colossians and the Apocalypse.

The second main characteristic of the opposition discernible in Col 2,16-23 is the privileging of apocalyptic visions as a source of authority. The description by the author of Colossians of what his opponents advocate (θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ὃ ἐώρακεν ἐμβατεύων, Col 2,18) has caused numerous interpretational difficulties. There is general agreement on θέλων ἐν, a Hebraism that corresponds to *hapes b^e* and means to delight or take pleasure in⁽⁷⁸⁾. The noun ταπεινοφροσύνῃ which recurs in Col 2,23, clearly marks an aspect of the opponents’ piety. The meaning in

⁽⁷⁶⁾ See S.J.D. COHEN, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*. Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties (Berkeley 1999) 193-197.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ On Revelation and Judaism, see AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, 168-172; A.T. KRAABEL, “Paganism and Judaism: The Sardis Evidence”, *Paganisme, Judaïsme, Christianisme: Influences et affrontements dans le monde antique*, Mélanges offerts à Marcel Simon (ed. A. BENOIT – M. PHILONENKO – C. VOGEL) (Paris 1978) 13-33; and “The Diaspora Synagogue: Archaeological and Epigraphic Evidence since Sukenik”, *ANRW* 2.19.1, 477-510; YARBRO COLLINS, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 85-87; THOMPSON, *Revelation*, 173-174; F.W. HORN, “Zwischen der Synagoge des Satans und dem neuen Jerusalem: Die christlich-jüdische Standortbestimmung in der Apokalypse des Johannes”, *ZRGG* 46 (1994) 143-162; and P. BORG, “Polemism in the Book of Revelation”, *Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity: Issues of Polemic and Faith* (ed. C.A. EVANS – D.A. HAGNER; Minneapolis 1993) 199-211.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ See 1 Sam 18,22; 2 Sam 15,26; 1 Kings 10,9; 1 Chron 28,4; Ps 111,1; 146,10; *Test. Ash.* 1,6; LIGHTFOOT, *Colossians and Philemon*, 193, followed by most commentators.

Colossians, following the usage in the LXX and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, has the specific sense of humbling oneself or even self-mortification⁽⁷⁹⁾. Its recurrence in Col 3,12 as a positive characteristic marks this as a point of intra-Christian struggle⁽⁸⁰⁾. More problematic has been θρησκειά τῶν ἀγγέλων. Scholars, for most of this century at least, have usually interpreted the genitive as objective and assumed the author's opponents in fact worshiped angels⁽⁸¹⁾. But Francis's proposal for reading τῶν ἀγγέλων as a subjective genitive has gained significant support⁽⁸²⁾. While grammatically it could go either way, the subjective reading makes significantly more sense in context. The usage has parallels in 4 Macc 5,7 and Josephus *Ant.* 12.253 and overwhelming evidence in the Jewish and Christian apocalyptic tradition, including Qumran⁽⁸³⁾. Although scholars have uncovered evidence for angel worship in Asia during the first two centuries of the common era, it is extremely difficult to imagine any group that actually worshipped angels to have the sort of access to the Colossian community implied by Col 2,16-18⁽⁸⁴⁾. Heavenly ascent was a central

⁽⁷⁹⁾ See LXX Lev 16,29.31; 23,27.29.32; Ps 35,13; 69,10; Isa 58,3.5; Jdt 4,9; *Pss. Sol.* 3,8; *Herm. Vis.* 3.10.6; *Herm Sim.* 5.3.7; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 178. While most commentators follow this sense, Lohse employs "readiness to serve" in order to agree with his construction of θρησκειά τῶν ἀγγέλων: "for the worship of angels demands this" (*Colossians and Philemon*, 118).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ See DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 59, 63-75.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Supported by Dibelius' reading of ἐμβατεύω (Col 2,18) as a technical term for initiation into a mystery ("The Isis Initiation"). Taking the objective interpretation are Lohse, Schweitzer, Arnold and Martin. Note Francis' rejoinder (*Conflict at Colossae*, 181-182) to Lohse (*Colossians and Philemon*, 119 n. 36). Dunn surveys the evidence for the objective interpretation before choosing the subjective (*Colossians and Philemon*, 179-180).

⁽⁸²⁾ See *Conflict at Colossae*, 176-181; on ἐμβατεύω, *Conflict at Colossae*, 171-176 and "The Background of EMBATUEIN", *Conflict at Colossae*, 197-207. See also EVANS, "Colossians Mystics", 196-198; ROWLAND, "Apocalyptic Visions"; LEVISON, "2 *Apoc. Bar.* and Colossians", 100-101; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 158-161; and DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 180-184.

⁽⁸³⁾ See Isa 6,2-3; Ps 29,1-2; 148,1-2; *I Enoch* 14,18-23; 36,4.39-40; 61,10-12; Dan 7,10; 1QS^a 2.8-9; 1QH 3.21-22; 11.10-13; 1QS^b 4.25-26; *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4Q400-405); *Ascension of Isaiah* 7-9; *Apoc. Abr.* 17-18; *T. Job* 48-50; *Test. Lev.* 3.3-8; Luke 2,14; Phil 2,10-11; also 2 Cor 12,2-4. Revelation is discussed below.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ "Worship directed to angels pushes the interpreter to the edge of and even beyond this tradition [of speculation on angels in first century Judaism]" (DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 62).

aspect of many Jewish texts during this period⁽⁸⁵⁾. Moreover, this reading fits the immediate context of the two phrases, taking ἐμβατεύων in its root sense as “entering” without resorting to awkward translations of ἃ ἐώρακεν ἐμβατεύων⁽⁸⁶⁾. The author of Colossians can hardly deny the existence of angels or that angels worship God. He can only enjoin against a Christian prophet who makes a heavenly vision of the angels, rather than received tradition, the source of authority.

Revelation contains more references to angels than any other book of the NT. The seven messages in Rev 2–3 are sent “to the angel” (τῷ ἄγγέλῳ) of each church⁽⁸⁷⁾. John describes the worship of angels in the heavenly throne room (Rev 5,2.11; 7,11-12; 8,2-5; 9,14; 15,5-8; etc.), often in great detail, which he had seen upon entering heaven (Rev 4,1-2). Angels deliver the Apocalypse to John; initiate action on earth; hand John scrolls and give him instructions; interpret visions; and guide John in the New Jerusalem⁽⁸⁸⁾. Indeed, John takes a position on the genitive in Col 2,18⁽⁸⁹⁾. Twice, apparently as a defense against being characterized as θέλων ἐν θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἄγγέλων with an objective genitive, John is spurned by angels for falling at their feet

⁽⁸⁵⁾ See M. HIMMELFARB, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York and Oxford 1993); C.R.A. MORRAY-JONES, “Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul’s Apostolate”, *HTR* 86 (1993) 177-217 and 265-292.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ E.g., “as he had visions of them during the mystery rites” (LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 114), taking Dibelius’ research on the Claros inscriptions as determinative. Schweizer dismisses the subjective reading of τῶν ἄγγέλων based on 2,23 because it refers to an activity of the Colossians rather than angels, but does not provide a discussion or translation of ἃ ἐώρακεν ἐμβατεύων (*Colossians*, 159 and “Slaves of the Elements”, 465 n. 39). The discussion of 2,23 does indeed focus upon the Colossians’ activity with respect to the *halakah* described in 2,16.20-21 (noted above as the most salient aspect of the opposition). In a particularly flimsy reading of Rev 22,8ff, Schweizer writes that “God, Christ and the angels form a heavenly triad” (*Colossians* 159-160).

⁽⁸⁷⁾ See Rev 2,1.8.12.18; 3,1.7.14. Roloff contends that the seven angels of the messages are a criticism of angel worship (*Revelation. A Continental Commentary* [Minneapolis 1993] 38-40), but see AUNE, *Revelation 1–5*, 108-112 and 131-132.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ See esp. Rev 7,1-3; 8,7-9,13 and 11,15 (the seven angels and the seven trumpets); 10,1-11; 16,1-17 (the seven bowls); Revelation 18 *passim* (the destruction of the city of Babylon); and the interpreting angel in 17,1-18 and 21,9–22,6.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ So also FRANCIS, “Humility and Angelic Worship”, *Conflict at Colossae*, 179.

(Rev 19,10; 22,8-10)⁽⁹⁰⁾. While this does not need to be a direct response to Colossians, it is clear that the author of the Apocalypse wants to avoid charges of angel worship against his prophetic community even while privileging revelation from angels. The heavenly visions and descriptions of angelic worship are more than major literary aspects of the Apocalypse. For John, these heavenly visions legitimate his role as a prophet and his authority in the church and provide the content of his moral and theological instruction (see Rev 1,19; 5,4-5; 10,8-11; 14,13; 19,10; 21,5; 22,8-10.16-20). The ascent to heaven described in Rev 4–22, moreover, was almost certainly not John's first vision⁽⁹¹⁾. His prophetic authority within the Asian Christian communities was based on a long series of visions, probably going back to Palestine, and certainly to the time of the composition of Colossians.

Col 2,16-23 also describes an intimate relationship between the opponents and the Colossian community. The verbs in 2,16 and 2,18 are telling in this regard. The opponents are able to condemn (κρινέτω) and disqualify (καταβραβεύτω) other Christians in Colossae, Hierapolis, and Laodicea on the basis of whether they eat or drink certain items, celebrate festivals or Sabbaths, or have mystical visions of angels in heaven. It is unlikely that someone *outside* the Christian community would be able to judge or condemn in the manner implied here. The opponents must therefore have authority *within* the Christian community. Col 2,16 is the only use of κρίνω in Colossians, but Paul's use in Romans and 1 Corinthians provides analogies for how the verb functions in Colossians as part of intra-communal judgment. While God is frequently the agent of judging or condemning (e.g. Rom 2,1-16; 3,6-7; 1 Cor 4,5), when Paul discusses internal disagreements over food and idol-meat (similar to the problem in Colossians), he uses the verb κρίνω to describe the acts of judging to be avoided *within* the community (see Rom 14,3.4.5.10.22)⁽⁹²⁾. While certainly not a

⁽⁹⁰⁾ A number of commentators see Rev 19,10 and 22,8b-9 as a polemic against angel worship (W. BOUSSET, *Die Offenbarung Johannis* [KEK; Göttingen 1906] 493; SWETE, *Apocalypse*, 248, 304; BORING, *Revelation*, 194; and ROLOFF, *Revelation*, 213. See R.A. BAUCKHAM, "The Worship of Jesus", *The Climax of Prophecy*. Studies on the Book of Revelation (Edinburgh 1993) 118-149; and AUNE, *Revelation 17–22*, 1034-1039.

⁽⁹¹⁾ See above, n. 22.

⁽⁹²⁾ See also 1 Cor 5,12, in which Paul distinguishes between the church judging those within the community and God judging those outside; and 1 Cor 6,1-6, which offers an apocalyptic vision of the church judging the world,

technical term, κρίνω in Col 2,16 indicates that someone within the Christian community is doing the condemning. Similarly, no one could “disqualify” (καταβραβεύτω) a fellow Christian unless they had some standing⁽⁹³⁾. A charismatic prophet, citing heavenly visions of angels, could command such authority.

The author of Colossians, responding to the threat against his own authority from John and his prophetic community, tries to turn his audience’s attention away from vision of angels in the heavenly throne room. He values the established tradition handed down in the churches over prophetic visions that raise challenges to *his* authority on moral and theological matters.

IV.

The dispute between the two opposing groups goes deeper than the basic issues outlined in Col 2,16-23. It also includes eschatological and Christological dimensions. The source of their disagreements over what Christ has done and has yet to do is no doubt the heavenly revelations brandished by John as a source of authority and challenged by the author of Colossians. These visions include more than descriptions of angels worshiping in the heavenly throne room. They also describe “what is, and what is to take place after this” (Rev 1,19). The eschatological focus of these apocalyptic visions has become the source of ideological conflict between the apocalyptic prophets and the Pauline establishment in Colossae. Col 2,9-15 is important rhetorically because it develops the author’s christological and eschatological position in a polemical context, between the introduction and first assault against the opponents in Col 2,4-8 and the fuller attack in 2,16-23⁽⁹⁴⁾. Thus, the positions set forth here support the more direct attacks in 2,4-8 and 2,16-23.

Two points should be noted. The first concerns what has been accomplished in Christians. Col 2,10 continues the theme of the πλήρωμα (cf. Col 1,19), as the author assures his audience that they

including the angels; cf. Rev 20,4-5. DeMaris makes the comparison to Romans but does not note the intracommunal, Christian nature of the discussion (*Colossian Controversy*, 57-58).

⁽⁹³⁾ On καταβραβεύτω see LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 117 and DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 177. The verb suggests robbing a person of a prize unjustly; see BAGD, 409.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Contra DEMARIS, *Colossian Controversy*, 41-45.

“have come to fullness” in Christ (ἐστέ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι), a strongly realized statement without any eschatological reservation⁽⁹⁵⁾. Then, Col 2,12 makes the strong claim that in baptism, the Colossians “were also raised with him [i.e. Christ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε] through faith in the power of God”⁽⁹⁶⁾. Col 2,12 is a striking parallel and reinterpretation of Rom 6,4, with the significant use of the aorist for συνεγείρω. The shift in the eschatological horizon is an important piece of evidence for the deutero-Pauline authorship of Colossians and is evident in other parts of the letter. Col 2,13-14 expresses this realized eschatology consistently (note the aorist περιετμήθητε, 2,11 and συνεζωοποίησεν, 2,13)⁽⁹⁷⁾.

In contrast, the visions of the Apocalypse could be described as a strong warning against any realized eschatological claims. The messages to the seven churches each end with a *future* promise to “those who conquer” that they will receive a heavenly reward (δώσω in Rev 2,7.11.17.28; 3,5.12.21). As discussed above, the message to Laodicea condemns that community for its realized eschatology: “for you say ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing’” (Rev 3,17). Christ has made the Christian community into a kingdom and a priesthood (Rev 1,6; 5,10), but they *will* rule upon the earth (βασιλεύσουσιν, 5,10)⁽⁹⁸⁾. The inheritance of the New Jerusalem is

⁽⁹⁵⁾ See LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 57; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 152-153 (“inflated and hyperbolic” language); and A.J.M. WEDDERBURN, “The Theology of Colossians”, *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters* (ed. A.T. LINCOLN – A.J.M. WEDDERBURN) (New Testament Theology; Cambridge 1993) 31-32 on the term πλήρωμα in Colossians.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Cf. Col 1,13-14; 3,11; 4,11. Käsemann sees the hymn as a baptismal liturgy (“Primitive Christian Baptismal Liturgy”). Dunn sees in 2,11-13 at least evidence of the Jewish character of earliest Christianity (περιτέμνω, περιτομή, ἄκροβυστία), in particular Paul (Rom 2,25-27; Gal 2,7-8), and at the most that circumcision was a factor in the Colossian dispute (*Colossians and Philemon*, 153-158). There is no evidence in Colossians or Revelation, however, that the apocalyptic prophets insisted on circumcision; see LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 101-102; cf. POKORNY, *Colossians*, 124-125.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Cf. ἡγέρθη and περιπατήσωμεν Rom 6,4 and συζήσωμεν Rom 6,8. It also raises exegetical problems (e.g. the construal of the dative τοῖς δόγμασιν) which are beyond the scope of this paper. See LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 103-106; SCHWEIZER, *Colossians*, 143-146; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 158-162; and HÜBNER, *Kolossier*, 82-83.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ See E. SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *Priester für Gott: Studien zum Herrschafts- und Priestermotiv in der Apokalypse* (NTAbh 7, n.s.; Münster 1972) 253-262; *Justice and Judgment*, 68-81; and A.J. BANDSTRA, “‘A Kingship and Priests’: Inaugurated Eschatology in the Apocalypse”, *CTJ* 27 (1992) 10-25.

an eschatological event that “those who conquer” may look forward to in the future (ὁ νικῶν κληρονομήσει, Rev 21,7). Even those who have been martyred in Revelation do not have the full benefits of those who have just been baptized in Colossians; they are told to “rest a little longer” (Rev 6,11) while Col 2,12 promises that its audience has already been raised with Christ (note Rev 6,11 πληρωθῶσιν; cf. Col 2,10 πεπληρωμένοι). Finally, in one of the most problematic passages for later Christian history, Rev 20,4-7 envisions a future millennial rule of the martyred saints.

The second point in Col 2,9-15 involves Christ’s accomplishments. Col 2,10 describes Christ as “the head of every ruler and authority”. John does not disagree that Christ is the ruler of earthly powers (see Rev 1,5 ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς), but the disagreement between the two texts could hardly be greater over the *current* status of “rulers and authorities”. Col 2,15 highlights the contrast⁽⁹⁹⁾. According to Colossians, God has “disarmed the rulers and authorities [ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας] and made a public examination of them, triumphing over them in it” (2,15). Again, all verb forms are aorist (ἀπεκδυσάμενος, ἐδειγμάτισεν, θριαμβεύσας). The language is primarily militaristic; θριαμβεύω suggests the triumphal procession of a Roman emperor and ἀπεκδύομαι, in the middle voice, means to disarm⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. Col 2,9-15 climaxes with the militaristic image of God’s defeat, through Christ, of all rulers and powers, earthly or heavenly. God’s domination through Christ of the ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι is a key notion in Colossians (Col 1,13.16; 2,10.15)⁽¹⁰¹⁾. The author of Colossians might anticipate the

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Col 2,13-15 “speak of what God has accomplished through Christ in striking terms unparalleled in the New Testament and at times puzzling in their imagery” (WEDDERBURN, “Theology of Colossians”, 42). Most commentators note here that God becomes the subject.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ See BAGD s.v. θριαμβεύω, ἀπεκδύομαι; G. DELLING, *TDNT* III, 159-160; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 112 n.142; POKORNY, *Colossians*, 140; WEDDERBURN, “Theology of Colossians”, 44-45; DUNN, *Colossians and Philemon*, 166-170. Roy Yates notes that the main metaphor is that of an imperial triumph but argues that the principalities and powers in Colossians are not evil forces that have been conquered but rather participate in the celebratory procession lead by Christ (“Colossians 2.15: Christ Triumphant”, *NTS* 37 [1991] 573-591). But the use of the verbs ἀποκαταλλάσσω and εἰρηνωποιέω in Col 1,20 suggest that an adversarial relationship existed between Christ and the ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Cf. Eph 1,21; 2,2; 3,10; 6,12; Rom 8,38; 1 Cor 15,24; Phil 2,9; 1 Pet 3,22; Heb 2,5; 2 Pet 2,10.

glorious epiphany of Christ (with the believers, 3,4) but he does not anticipate any future battles between Christ and the powers of this world⁽¹⁰²⁾.

Revelation, in contrast, describes nothing but future battles with the ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι of the world, which in Revelation are the “kings of the earth” and the other allies of Satan, in particular the two beasts. In Rev 12,18–13,18, John describes a vision of two “beasts” being given complete mastery over all social, political, religious, and economic activity on earth⁽¹⁰³⁾. The passage is typical. John envisions a series of climactic struggles before Satan is finally chained once and for all (Rev 20,1-4.7-10). Most importantly, the earthly powers and authorities have yet to be finally defeated (Rev 16,12-21; 17,14; 18,21-24; 19,11-21). Where the author of Colossians describes God’s victory through Christ as completed in the past, John describes these battles between the heavenly and demonic forces in the future (e.g., πολεμήσουσιν, 17,14; λυθήσεται, 20,7). The triumphal militarism of Col 2,15 could well be a response to violent imagery of visions such as we find in Revelation. The author of Colossians would not be responding to the written text but to the prophetic activity of John and his circle in the Asian churches, activity that included “dwelling on visions” of such future battles with the ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι of the world.

V.

Millennial views have caused disruptions in established Christian churches throughout history, from the “New Prophecy” of Montanus and his followers in the second century to the split between the Seventh Day Adventists and the Branch Davidians in the past century. It is highly plausible that the same sort of disturbance occurred in the Pauline churches of the Lycus valley, with the introduction of a radical apocalyptic Christian theology after the Roman war. Such a clash of theological perspectives would result in a powerful ideological struggle. Religious divisions arise, both in antiquity and in modern

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Col 3,4 is the only mention of the parousia in the letter. While Dunn suggests that eschatological expectations here could be read in either way (*Colossians and Philemon*, 208), Colossians eschatology is much more realized than Paul’s uncontested letters.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ The passive verb ἐδόθη in 13,5-7 is generally understood as an occurrence of the “divine passive”, implying that *God* has given the Beast this power; see SWETE, *Revelation*, 165; CAIRD, *Revelation*, 167; MOUNCE, *Revelation*, 254; ROLOFF, *Revelation*, 157.

times, over relatively small disagreements between groups which hold most of their beliefs in common. Power struggles gravitate toward these differences, however small they might be. When we consider the social and ideological ramifications of the christological and eschatological positions discussed here, we see the potential for a split between the more established hierarchy of the Pauline churches in Asia and the charismatic apocalyptic prophets from Palestine.

While bold indeed, my proposal raises an important methodological question about the scholarly construal of opponents in the NT texts that goes beyond the question of the Colossian opposition. Scholars have claimed that the Colossian opponents were Jewish, Gnostic, mystical, visionary, apocalyptic, philosophers, and of course syncretistic. The early Christians were all these. The advantage of my proposal is that one need not choose Jewish over pagan any more than one need say Paul was more “Greek” or “Jewish”. For the Colossian opponents, like all the early Christian groups of which we have evidence, were a diverse mix of these elements. The tendency to cast the opposition as a totally “other” group that can then be slanderously labeled “heretical” involves theological and canonical presuppositions that are at odds with the historical data and social-historical processes. While historical-critical scholars of the NT and early Christianity have learned to bracket the term “heresy” in the analysis of the earliest Christian groups, patterns of heresiological thinking remain in the scholarly discussion.

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SUMMARY

This paper argues that Revelation provides a social-historical, theological, and ideological context for the reconstruction of the Colossian opposition. The proposal is that the author of the Apocalypse arrived in Asia after the Jewish-Roman war; his “dwelling on visions” and prophetic activity challenged the emerging hierarchy within the churches, provoking a response in Paul’s name from the church leadership. Correspondences and parallels between the description of the opposition in Colossians and Revelation are developed exegetically, showing that eschatology and Christology were key issues in the dispute. This paper reexamines the heresiological rhetoric of Colossians, raising methodological questions about other scholarly reconstructions of the opposition as non-Christian.

The Doctrine of the Golden Mean in Qoh 7,15-18: A Universal Human Pursuit*

Qoh 7, 15-18 ⁽¹⁾ presents Qoheleth's statement of the golden mean, an ideology, with varying manifestations, in which a course of moderation is prescribed as the ideal. The "ideal", of course, depends largely on the perspective of the one who defines the mean. Though some earlier views of the passage saw a call for moderation ⁽²⁾, recent analyses may be split into two biases. The first states that the passage does not support the golden mean, often viewed as an "immoral doctrine" ⁽³⁾. The other bias affirms the golden mean, but sees it as a product of the Hellenistic age, presumably because the golden mean became popular under Aristotelian or Stoic influences ⁽⁴⁾. The first bias may be a reaction against the Hellenistic bent of the second, as many who reject the golden mean do so because of its purported Hellenistic origin. The aim of this investigation is to respond to the two biases, firstly, by demonstrating that the passage does support the golden mean, and secondly, by demonstrating that the golden mean is not the result of Hellenic influence, but a universal phenomenon.

I. The Presence of the Golden Mean in Qoheleth

In order to respond to the first bias regarding the presence of the golden mean in the passage, some questionable textual interpretations

* I would like to thank Dr. Bill T. Arnold, Dr. Sandra Richter and Dr. Brent A. Strawn for their valuable comments and suggestions.

⁽¹⁾ The golden mean, proper, is presented in 7,15-18, which is a part of the larger subsection of 7,15-22. V. 15, beginning with Qoheleth's formulaic statement *אֵלֶּכְךָ רֵאשִׁית* starts this section; v. 23, with Qoheleth again using a formulaic *כֹּל* statement, then, would begin a new sub-section. Within the section of 7,15-22, v. 15 serves as an introductory header, giving the reason for the advice to come in vv. 16-18. V. 19 speaks of the virtue of wisdom, while vv. 20-22 speak about the ubiquity of evil. The details of the relationships between these verses are further explored below.

⁽²⁾ W. Brindle includes a concise and helpful survey of earlier interpretations of 7,15-18. W. BRINDLE, "Righteousness and Wickedness in Ecclesiastes 7:15-18", *AUSS* 23 (1985) 243-257.

⁽³⁾ R.N. WHYBRAY, *Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI 1989) 120.

⁽⁴⁾ BRINDLE, "Righteousness and Wickedness", 244.

must be debunked. These observations may be rooted in the fact that a narrow view of the golden mean is theologically difficult, as it allows one to tolerate, even aim for, moderate wickedness ⁽⁵⁾. Some argue that the passage cannot state the mean because it refers to the extremes of wisdom and folly and avoids extreme ethical categories. This argument is based on the structural ordering of the terms צדיק, סכל, חכם and רשע ⁽⁶⁾ or the clauses in vv. 16-17 in which these terms occur ⁽⁷⁾, which stresses the middle terms, wisdom and folly, over and against righteousness and wickedness.

This disjunction between wisdom/folly and ethics is problematic, however, on several levels. Firstly, it is based on problematic structural observations, as each of the above views ignores the last clause of both v. 16 and v. 17 that begins with למה. These two verses, which are the crux of Qoheleth's golden mean, show a linear A-B-C-A'-B'-C' structure, which places no emphasis on one pair of terms over the other.

⁽⁵⁾ Of course, the theological impact of a doctrine of the golden mean is considerably reduced when the poles to be balanced are not absolute righteousness and wickedness. For example, Loyal Young argues that the balance is to be struck between complete apostasy and over-zealous fanaticism, the former, leading to divine punishment, the latter leading to martyrdom. A more comprehensive survey of these alternative poles is found in *ibid.*, 244-251.

⁽⁶⁾ J. LOADER, *Polar Structures in the Book of Qoheleth* (BZAW 152; New York 1979) 47. Loader makes the argument that parallelism between the four terms emphasizes wisdom and folly over and against ethics.

⁽⁷⁾ C.L. SEOW, *Ecclesiastes* (AB 23C; New York 1997) 267. Seow argues that the four clauses אלהי חכם, אלהי סכל, אלהי צדיק הרבה and אלהי רשע constituting the warnings of Qoheleth in vv. 16-17 are arranged in chiasm, and emphasize the poles of wisdom and folly, as the chiasm effectively states "the righteous is the opposite of the fool, 'to be wise' is the opposite of 'to be wicked.'" R. Murphy comes to a similar conclusion, that the passage does not reflect ethics, based on his observation that v. 18 does not focus on prescribed behavior leading to a positive result, but is merely a statement of the instability of life (R.E. MURPHY, *Ecclesiastes* [WBC 23A; Dallas, TX 1992] 70). However, the passage does not present v. 18 in opposition to the statements regarding the negative nature of life, but because of this view of life. Thus, v. 18, in a sense, becomes a "way out" for those who experience life in this manner, pointing out a positive result in that one who achieves balance "in this" and "from this", is the one who fears God. It makes clear that balance in life, then, is efficacious in at least one thing - religious devotion.

⁽⁸⁾ צדיק refers to right attitudes and conduct, according to the norms of society (SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 267), directed towards the divine or the human realm. (BRINDLE, "Righteousness and Wickedness", 254). The antonym רשע is to be seen in the same ethical light, and neither term refers to a relative good or evil, as often denoted by טוב and רע.

Verse 16

אֱלֹהֵי צְדִיק הָרַבָּה
וְאֱלֹהֵי חָכָם יוֹתֵר
לִמָּה תִשּׁוּמִם

Verse 17

אֱלֹהֵי רָשָׁע הָרַבָּה
וְאֱלֹהֵי סָכַל
לִמָּה תָמוּת בְּלֹא עֵתָךְ

Further, v. 15, which provides the foundation for the warnings against extreme behavior in vv.16-17, does so in clearly ethical terms by presenting the counter-traditional observation that a righteous one dies while a wicked one prolongs life. If there indeed is dissimilarity between wisdom/folly and ethics in this passage, it is illogical that Qoheleth would give advice regarding wisdom based on ethical observations. Additionally, it is unlikely that Qoheleth would view wisdom/folly and ethics, reflected in the terms, צְדִיק and רָשָׁע⁽⁸⁾, as disparate. Qoheleth is, at minimum, a negative commentary on traditional wisdom, as influenced by retribution theology⁽⁹⁾. But even if Qoheleth completely rejects traditional wisdom, this does not necessitate a rejection of the language of traditional wisdom. Hence, Qoheleth uses the terms and categories of traditional wisdom to formulate his critique. As often stated in Wisdom literature, then, wisdom and righteousness, and conversely, wickedness and folly, are not separate abstractions. Rather, they are unified concepts; perhaps one is even a derivative of the other⁽¹⁰⁾.

The argument is also made that the passage does not condone the golden mean because it warns against an excessive pretense to righteousness, rather than actual righteousness. It has been argued that the phrase אֱלֹהֵי צְדִיק הָרַבָּה is “elliptical” because it uses the 2mp imperfect of הָיָה with an adjectival form of צָדִיק, rather than the 2mp imperfect of the root. In this light, “[Qoheleth’s] warning [is]...against self-righteousness and pretensions to wisdom”⁽¹¹⁾ only. Accordingly, if the warning was against actual righteousness, the statement אֱלֹהֵי צָדִיק would have been used, instead⁽¹²⁾. Within Qoheleth, however, the terms צָדִיק and רָשָׁע never refer to one who acts in pretense. More

⁽⁹⁾ T.A. Perry (*Dialogues with Kohelet* [University Park, PA 1983]) and R. Gordis, (*Koheleth – The Man and His World* [New York 1951]) have noted that Qoheleth represents a dialogue between a sage and a pessimist on the merits of traditional wisdom. It has also been noted that a key conviction of Qoheleth was that “wisdom cannot achieve its goal” (J. CRENSHAW, *Old Testament Wisdom. An Introduction* [Louisville, KY 1998] 117).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cf. Prov 2,6-9; 9,9; 10,31; 11,30; 14,16.

⁽¹¹⁾ WHYBRAY, *Ecclesiastes*, 120.

⁽¹²⁾ Ibid.

importantly, the so-called elliptical construction – the imperfect of הָיָה with an adjective in lieu of a verbal cognate – occurs at least twice elsewhere in Qoheleth, with neither use denoting pretense⁽¹³⁾.

It has also been argued that the hithpael stem of the root חָכַם in v. 17 adds an element of pretense to the verb⁽¹⁴⁾. This conclusion is problematic, however, as the only other occurrence of the hithpael of חָכַם, in Exod 1,10, refers to a demonstration of, not pretense to, wisdom. The hithpael of חָכַם does occur in Later Biblical Hebrew, specifically four times in Sirach, but these uses do not refer to a pretense of wisdom, either⁽¹⁵⁾. The “pretense” view of these warnings, then, is cumbersome, as it forces the reader to reckon two nearly symmetrical phrases in extremely divergent ways⁽¹⁶⁾. This cannot hold, as the nearly identical structure between the two verses calls for an identical interpretation⁽¹⁷⁾. Thus, both warnings must point to either a pretense of righteousness *and* wickedness, or to actual righteousness and wickedness. Since the passage does not shy away from ethical categories, and because it does not refer in any way to pretense, Qoheleth’s warnings must be against extreme, actual righteousness and wickedness.

In taking a deeper look at the warnings, then, it must be noted that the advice for moderation is rooted in yet another of Qoheleth’s “life” observations – that a righteous person dies בַּצְדִּיק and a wicked person lives בַּרְעָהוּ. This observation is a strong challenge to traditional wisdom, but, like the rest of Qoheleth’s “challenges”, are only

⁽¹³⁾ Qoh 5,1 states “let your words be few”, using the adjectival form of the root מָעַח. The verbal form of this root is not foreign to Qoheleth, for in 12,3, it is used in the piel perfect form. Qoh 8,12 states “it will be good to the fearers of God”, again using an adjectival form in the place of an attested verbal root יָצַח.

⁽¹⁴⁾ As evidence for the “pretense” aspect of the hithpael, Whybray (*Ecclesiastes*, 121), refers to 2 Samuel 13,5, where the hithpael of חָלָה means “pretending to be sick”.

⁽¹⁵⁾ The occurrence of the hithpael of חָכַם in Sir 32,4 refers to a demonstration of, not necessarily, fallacious wisdom. The other occurrences, in Sir 6,32 and 38,24–25 refer to acquiring wisdom, rather than demonstrating false wisdom. For the classification of Sirach as “Later Biblical Hebrew”, see A. SÁENZ-BADILLOS, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (trans. J. Elwolde) (Cambridge 1996) 112–113; 126.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Whybray himself notes the nearly identical clause וְאֵלֶי־תָהִי כָכָל refers not to a pretense to evil, but to the danger of being “completely abandoned to wickedness or folly” (WHYBRAY, *Ecclesiastes*, 121). See also MURPHY, *Ecclesiastes*, 70.

⁽¹⁷⁾ M. STRANGE, *The Question of Moderation in Eccl 7:15–18* (CUSST 199; Washington, D.C. 1969) 64.

statements of facts, not attempts at producing a “counter-dogma”⁽¹⁸⁾. Qoheleth simply states that “a man perishes *in* his righteousness”⁽¹⁹⁾ with no explanation why this happens, only that it does, for such is the unpredictable nature of life⁽²⁰⁾. And because life is unpredictable, moderation is prescribed. Neither extreme is desirable, but why?

The warning against extreme righteousness points to an effort to achieve something un-human. In essence, it is a warning against a hopeless aspiration “to a righteousness that admits only of good but allows no mistakes at all”⁽²¹⁾. In Qoheleth’s view, this aspiration is hopeless, because, as stated in v. 20, אִין צַדִּיק. This does not mean that there are none righteous at all, however⁽²²⁾, as the clause אִין צַדִּיק is modified by the relative clause אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה טוֹב וְלֹא יִחַטָּא, which reminds the reader that “There is no one so righteous”.⁽²³⁾ A pursuit of hyper-righteousness, then, is the ultimate act of “presumption”⁽²⁴⁾, and “hubris”⁽²⁵⁾, because it is more than an effort to please the divine. It is an endeavor to span the great divide between humanity and divinity. The warning is a reminder that one must live life happy in the lot that God has given, and not strive for what lies beyond the mortal’s grasp⁽²⁶⁾.

Seeing that a pursuit of extreme righteousness leads to ruin, one may be tempted to head for the other extreme. The second warning in v. 17 reminds the reader that this is not advisable, either. True, humanity is burdened with imperfection, but this does not permit unchecked debauchery. Humanity is still called to fear God, and in doing so, must take care to do what God has commanded. This call, however, is tempered with a reminder that humanity will fall short. In a way, the warnings are a measure of grace, as they free humanity from the notion that the divine expects perfection. The warning against being very wicked, then, may not be a ringing endorsement to be moderately wicked, but accepts that humanity’s pursuit of the divine will be flawed.

⁽¹⁸⁾ STRANGE, *The Question of Moderation*, 62.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ibid.

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. Qoh 6,12; 8,7 and 10, 14.

⁽²¹⁾ SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 267.

⁽²²⁾ Strange asserts that because Qoheleth clearly states “there are no righteous”, the idea of the golden mean is not present in this passage, since logically, one cannot be warned to not become something that is inherently impossible (STRANGE, *The Question of Moderation*, 87).

⁽²³⁾ SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 267.

⁽²⁴⁾ BROWN, *Ecclesiastes*, 82.

⁽²⁵⁾ SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 268 and M. FOX, *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up*. A Rereading of Ecclesiastes (Grand Rapids, MI 1999) 260.

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. Qoh 2, 24; 3,13 and 6,2.

These two warnings are joined together by v. 18, “It is good that you should take hold of one without letting go of the other”. The antecedents of the demonstrative pronouns (בזה...בזה) are ambiguous, and may refer either to the warnings against extreme behavior or to extreme behavior itself. What is clear, however, is the call for balance, seizing one without letting go of the other, in the one who fears God, for this allows one to צַדִּיק⁽²⁷⁾. What Qoheleth approves of then, is no ethical nihilism, but, “a concession to the reality of human imperfection” for “the mortal at best is...*simul iustus et peccator* – at once a just one and a sinner”⁽²⁸⁾. Balance between righteousness and wickedness is not an ethical compromise, “as if righteousness should be tempered with a modicum of wickedness”⁽²⁹⁾. Rather, it is the proper manifestation of fear. In fearing God, one must recognize the great chasm between humanity and divinity. There are simply things humans cannot hope to achieve because of their finite nature. But, in fearing God, one must obey the divine. It is “recognition that one is human, and so one can be no less but also is no more”⁽³⁰⁾. And because the golden mean of Qoheleth does not advocate an ethical average, there is a reminder in v. 19 of the great value of wisdom⁽³¹⁾. It is yet another reminder that imperfect humanity has been called to higher achievements. But once again, this call is quickly tempered by a reminder of the inherent fallibility of mortals in vv. 20-22.

⁽²⁷⁾ The meaning of the root צַדִּיק in v. 18 is ambiguous but not problematic. Some prefer the primary lexical meaning, “to go out”, and see this clause as assurance that the one who is balanced “goes out” or “escapes” from כָּלֶם, that is, the fates of desolation and death listed in vv. 16-17. Others prefer a Mishnaic Hebrew usage of the root meaning “to do one’s duty” (GORDIS, *Koheleth*, 267; G. OGDEN, *Qoheleth* [Sheffield, England 1987] 116; FOX, *A Time to Tear Down*, 262) or “to fulfill obligations” (STRANGE, *The Question of Moderation*, 101). In this sense, the demonstrative pronouns must refer to the warnings against extreme behavior, and not extreme behavior itself, and assures that the one who fears God will succeed with “both” of the instructions; that is, they will fulfill their calling with a balanced perspective (STRANGE, *The Question of Moderation*, 101; CRENSHAW, *Ecclesiastes*, 142; FOX, *A Time to Tear Down*, 262). The verse itself gives little indication as to which meaning is preferred, but clearly, both options assure some measure of prosperity as a result of balance.

⁽²⁸⁾ SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 268.

⁽²⁹⁾ BROWN, *Ecclesiastes*, 82.

⁽³⁰⁾ SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 268.

⁽³¹⁾ The relationship of v. 19 to this passage is debated. Seow states that v. 19 is an example of overconfidence that is warned against in v. 16, with v. 20, in parallel, speaking against overconfidence in righteousness (SEOW, *Ecclesiastes*, 269). Barton prefers to view the verse as a gloss (G.A. BARTON, *A Critical and*

II. The Golden Mean in Greek Literature

This understanding of Qoheleth's golden mean is much closer to Greek thought than has been previously held⁽³²⁾, a fact that may lead some to classify Qoheleth as a product of the Hellenistic age. As is well known, the most influential articulation of the golden mean among the early Greek philosophers was Aristotle's conception of the golden mean, which states that every virtue lies between two associated, but polar vices. The virtuous action is not an arithmetic average between the two extremes, however, for "sometimes, the right amount is much closer to one [extreme] than the other"⁽³³⁾. The determinants for the virtuous action include "the demands of the situation"⁽³⁴⁾, along with the temperament of the individual⁽³⁵⁾. Based

Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ecclesiastes [Edinburgh, Scotland 1908] 144) while Fox radically emends the text by moving the verse to follow 7,12 (Fox, *A Time to Tear Down*, 256-7). Gordis notes that vv. 16-17 and vv. 19-20 lie in chiasmic arrangement, with v.19 giving the reason for v.17, and v.20 giving the reason for v.16 (Gordis, *Koheleth*, 268). It seems likely that the verse functions to tilt the golden mean in the direction of wisdom/righteousness (Cf. BROWN, *Ecclesiastes*, 82). The golden mean, as will be demonstrated, is not the average between two extremes, and so, it seems that Qoheleth, even as he warns against hyper-righteousness, still extols righteousness as a beneficial trait in humanity. After all, evil is ubiquitous and unavoidable (cf. Qoh 7,20-22), and so righteousness is to be favored, even as the extreme of it is to be avoided.

⁽³²⁾ Among those arguing against this relationship is M. Fox, who states that even though Qoheleth reflects the notions of moderation, it does not parallel the Aristotelian mean, which Fox defines as the mid-point between two extremes. He contrasts this with the idea of Qoheleth, who recognizes the importance of avoiding extremes, but still places emphasis on the pole of wisdom (Fox, *A Time to Tear Down*, 260). Additionally, W. Brown is careful to note that though Qoheleth calls for moderation, he does not call for a "muddled mean", where values are mixed and the average is held supreme (W. BROWN, *Ecclesiastes* [Louisville, KY 1989] 82). Similarly, Murphy states that this doctrine is not the golden mean, seeing the Greek golden mean(s) as an advocate of "nothing in excess" (MURPHY, *Ecclesiastes*, 73). Clearly, though, neither Qoheleth nor Aristotle view the mean as a doctrine of averages in action, and so, the above seem to involve a misunderstanding of Aristotle's mean.

⁽³³⁾ J. BARNES, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge 1995) 217.

⁽³⁴⁾ S.R.L. CLARK, *Aristotle's Man: Speculations Upon Aristotelian Anthropology* (Oxford 1975) 96.

⁽³⁵⁾ "By the intermediate relatively to us that which is neither too much nor too little – and this is not one, nor the same for all....if ten pounds are too much for a particular person to eat and two too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order six pounds; for this is also perhaps too much for the person who is to

on these two criteria, “[one] must consider what [one is] most inclined to” and “and drag [oneself] away to the contrary extreme”⁽³⁶⁾. According to Aristotle, then, some extreme actions are quite appropriate on some occasions, for some people, while the opposite extreme may be appropriate on other occasions, for other people⁽³⁷⁾. At no point, though, does the Aristotelian mean call for lukewarm or “average” action. Both Aristotle and Qoheleth, then, focus not on actions that strike the middle road, but appropriate actions.

In addition to Aristotle, there are other presentations of the golden mean in Greek thought. The Delphic mean states “nothing in excess”⁽³⁸⁾, while the *Pseudo-Phokylida* (ca. 540 BCE) states “In thy religion, keep the mean, due measure is best”⁽³⁹⁾. Theognis the Megarian (ca. 520 BCE) also places much emphasis on the idea of moderation. The primary themes of his works are well articulated by the often occurring terms “order”, “equal”, “middle”, “measure” and “nothing excessively”⁽⁴⁰⁾. Theognis applies the golden mean to politics, as he advises “Be not over vexed at the citizens in confusion, Kyrnos, but keep to the middle way as I do” and also counsels “Calmly keep to the middle way with your feet, as I do”⁽⁴¹⁾. He also applies the principle of the golden mean in social behavior, as he states “There are two lots of drinking for wretched mortals...Between these, I will choose the mean, nor will you persuade me either not to drink or to drink too little”⁽⁴²⁾. The parallels between Theognis and Qoheleth also extend into the social atmosphere that led to their literary activity. Just as Qoheleth sought to provide an accounting for the unexpected nature

take it....Thus a master of any art avoids excess and defect, but seeks the intermediate and chooses this – the intermediate not in the object by relatively to us”. *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 2, 1106^a31 to 1106^b6. Translation from *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (ed. J. BARNES) (Princeton, NJ 1984) 1747.

⁽³⁶⁾ *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 2, 1109^b2-3. Translation from BARNES, *The Complete Works*, 1751.

⁽³⁷⁾ Aristotle makes clear that there are some things (intellect, money for the liberal man, power for the brave man) which are always favored (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 10, 1177^b28 to 1178^b7.), while other actions (spite, shamelessness, envy, adultery, theft, murder) are to be avoided at all times (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 2, 1107^a9-26).

⁽³⁸⁾ CLARK, *Aristotle's Man*, 84.

⁽³⁹⁾ Line 98 of the *Pseudo-Phokylida*. Translation from *ibid.*, 79.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ D. B. LEVINE, “Symposium and the Polis”, *Theognis of Megara* (ed. T. J. Figueira and G. Nagy) (Baltimore 1985) 180.

⁽⁴¹⁾ *Theognis*, Lines 219-220 and Lines 331-332. Translation from *ibid.*, 181.

⁽⁴²⁾ *Theognis*, Lines 837-840. Translation from *ibid.*, 183.

of life and the ineffectiveness of traditional wisdom, so Theognis also sought to give a reckoning of the turbulent economical and social atmosphere of Megara, amidst the reversal of traditional values ⁽⁴³⁾.

In addition to the golden mean, other thematic parallels between Qoheleth and Greek thought have been identified. The preference in the text for אלהים over יהוה may emulate an evolution in Greek religion in which the concepts of deities were abandoned in favor of the non-committal concepts of fate ⁽⁴⁴⁾. The “knowledge through observation” element of Qoheleth might also echo the intellectual process of Hellenism ⁽⁴⁵⁾. Several traces of Epicurean thought have also been identified in Qoheleth. Specifically, Qoh 3,11 and 5,1 may reflect the Epicurean notion of the distant, self-sufficient deity; while Qoh 9,5 mirrors the Epicurean belief of the finality of death ⁽⁴⁶⁾. Qoheleth’s cyclical view of life and its travails may also reflect the Stoic cyclical view of nature (1,1-11; 3,15a) ⁽⁴⁷⁾. A tremendous range of thematic parallels has also been established by Rainer Braun, who draws conceptual links between Qoheleth and a significant variety of ancient Greek writers in virtually every genre ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

III. Hellenization and its Impact on the Levant

Because of general thematic parallels, as well as the specific parallels relating to the golden mean, between Qoheleth and Greek thought, the conventional wisdom is that Qoheleth is a product of the Hellenistic era ⁽⁴⁹⁾. This conclusion is problematic, however, based on

⁽⁴³⁾ V.C. STEVENS, “Opposites, Reversals, and Ambiguities: The Unsettled World of Theognis”, *Theognis*, 159-75.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ M. HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism* (trans. J. Bowden) (London 1974), I, 123.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Ibid., I, 117.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ C. WHITLEY, *Koheleth* (BZAW 145; New York 1979) 166.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Ibid., 170. Briefly, the Stoics held that Zeus created all things; that all would be destroyed in a universal conflagration that only Zeus would survive; and that Zeus would re-create the world after the destruction. The Epicureans also held a similar view of a cycle of creation, destruction and re-creation.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Among the plethora of parallels that Braun cites are Homer, Xenophanes, Archilocus, Sophocles, Euripides, Epicurus, Solon, and Hesiod. Braun also includes comprehensive tables which present ties between passages in Qoheleth and Greek works in lyric poetry, philosophy and drama. R. BRAUN, *Kohelet und die Frühhellenistische Popularphilosophie* (BZAW 130; New York 1973) 146-149.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Hengel proposes a dating between 270-220 BCE, noting that this era of massive change in Greek religion provided the perfect atmosphere for the skepticism

the nature of Greek influence on the Levant, which began far earlier than the time of Alexander. Moreover, the interaction between Greece and the Levant, either during Alexander's time or before it, was hardly uni-directional. Related to these factors is strong evidence that the linguistic data of Qoheleth supports a Persian Era dating for the text (early 5th to late 4th BCE), rather than the widely held Hellenistic dating. These factors, discussed further below, combine to reveal that the golden mean of Qoheleth is not simply a product of the Hellenistic age.

There is strong evidence pointing to the presence of Greek culture in the Levant far before the time of Alexander. Current research and material evidence suggests that "first contact" between Greece and the Levant took place as early as the 11th century BCE⁽⁵⁰⁾. The volume of material evidence from this period is not large, but widely distributed from north to south. Evidence also points to a fairly wide-scale importation of Eastern Greek and Corinthian material into the Levant by the 8th-7th centuries BCE. The material evidence from this era is not limited to the coastal areas, but is also found at significant inland sites, some of which lie along major trade routes⁽⁵¹⁾. In addition to the importation of Greek material culture was the settlement of Greek people, primarily traders and mercenaries⁽⁵²⁾, before the Alexandrian era⁽⁵³⁾. While the significance of the cultural impact of mercenaries or traders can be debated, the same cannot be said for another group of early Greek migrants, the Philistines.

of Qoheleth (HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism*, I, 116). Whitley poses an even later date, 175-164 BCE, based on the broad stroke of Epicurean ideas in the text which "presupposes a sustained contact with Epicurean thought which could hardly be possible before the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes" (WHITLEY, *Koheleth*, 165).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Among the finds that support this date are Greek vessels found at Tyre, at Tel Hadar, located along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and at Tel Dor, located along the Mediterranean Sea, all of which date to the 11th century BCE. E. STERN, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* (New York 2001) 217 and J.C. WALDBAUM, "Early Greek Contacts with the Southern Levant 1000-600 B.C.: The Eastern Perspective", *BASOR* 293 (1994) 57.

⁽⁵¹⁾ WALDBAUM, "Early Greek Contacts", 60.

⁽⁵²⁾ See W. NIEMEIER, "Archaic Greeks in the Orient: Textual and Archaeological Evidence", *BASOR* 322 (2001) 16-24 for a comprehensive survey of material and historical evidence of the presence of Greek mercenaries in the Near East during this early period. Niemeier also notes that neither the traders nor the mercenaries formed resident Greek communities until the middle of the 7th century BCE. Before that time, Greek presence in the Levant was in the form of an *enoikismos*, small community colonies (pp. 12-13).

⁽⁵³⁾ STERN, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 221.

Widely held to be the first group of Greek settlers in the Levant, the Philistines introduced and maintained several distinct, Greek cultural elements into their new homeland⁽⁵⁴⁾. Further, a royal dedicatory inscription from Ekron, likely dating to the 7th century BCE⁽⁵⁵⁾, may also reveal that the Philistines maintained a trace of the Greek language in the Levant. The inscription, written in a peculiar Semitic script⁽⁵⁶⁾, dedicates a temple in Ekron to an unknown female deity *ptgyh* - "...for *pt/glyh*, his lady, May she bless him, and protect him, and prolong his days, and bless his land"⁽⁵⁷⁾. On the basis of paleographic analysis, Aaron Demsky notes that *ptgyh* should be read as *ptnyh*, vocalized as *potnia*⁽⁵⁸⁾, "the common Archaic Greek word

⁽⁵⁴⁾For elements of Greek culture evidenced by the Philistines, see L. STAGER, "The Impact of the Sea Peoples", *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (ed. T. LEVY) (New York 1995) 332-348. Notable in this discussion is the evidence of an increase in hog raising during the early Iron Age, an activity which was completely absent in the highlands, and likely echoing "the Mycenaean and Greek positive attitude toward pork" (p. 344). Stager also notes that the excavations of the Pentapolis, Ekron in particular, reveal a "full-blown urban tradition on the landscape, quite different from the Canaanite patterns which preceded them" (p. 345). Religious elements may also have been imported by the Philistines, as well. A sanctuary in Ekron revealed a large circular hearth, an unknown feature in the Levant, but one which "has a long history in the public and domestic architecture of the Aegean, Cypriot and Anatolian worlds", as well as being a central feature of Mycenaean palaces at Pylos, Mycenae and Tiryns (p. 347). As a whole, Stager sees the Pentapolis as evidence of an "urban imposition", which was in "harmony with that of the Aegean world" (pp. 347-348).

⁽⁵⁵⁾The dating of the inscription is surmised from various Assyrian records. The annals of Esharhaddon (680-699 BCE) mention records that mention Achish / Ikausu, the builder of the temple. His father, Padi, is also mentioned in the taxation records of Sennacherib. S. GITIN et al., "A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron", *IEJ* 47 (1997) 9.

⁽⁵⁶⁾Gitin, Dothan and Naveh note that the script of the inscription is not the same as those of other Philistine inscriptions from the 7th century BCE. They states that most of the letters are similar to Phoenician or Hebrew script, but "since one would expect a more developed Hebrew or Phoenician script in the first half of the seventh century B.C.E., it seems likely that the script belongs neither to the Phoenician or Hebrew series, but rather to some peculiar local script", *ibid.*, 13.

⁽⁵⁷⁾The entire inscription, with the *ptnyh* emendation, reads "The temple (which) Achish son of Padi son of Ysd son of Ada son of Ya'ir ruler of Ekron, built for Ptnyh, his Lady. May she bless him and keep him and prolong his days and bless his land". A. DEMSKY, "Discovering a Goddess", *BAR* 24 (1998) 56.

⁽⁵⁸⁾The original excavators of the site preferred the reading *ptgyh*, seeing it as the name of a previously unknown deity, perhaps with the *gyh* domain of the term

for ‘divine’”⁽⁵⁹⁾. The use of this Greek term, then, may provide a glimpse into the Philistine’s acculturation into their Semitic homeland. First, it is significant to note that this Greek term was written in a script quite similar to Phoenician and Hebrew. Second, the deity referred to as *ptnyh*, is also called ‘*dth*, “his mistress”, revealing solid knowledge of not just the use of the Greek term, but also of the local Semitic dialect⁽⁶⁰⁾. The presence and use of this term suggests, at minimum, that an element of the Greek language was maintained nearly five centuries after the arrival of the Philistines from the Aegean. This fact, then, along with the unique cultural traits of the Philistines identified by Stager, strongly suggest that it may be necessary to speak of the Philistine’s cultural roots in the Aegean.

Further, the use of the term in a Semitic context also reveals that the Philistines were heavily influenced by their local Semitic climate, demonstrating that while elements of Greek culture were present in the Levant, they were not simply transfused, but applied in a distinctively Semitic manner. Cultural exchange between Greece and the Near East did not simply devolve into a wholesale imitation or adaptation of Greek ways. Hellenization, and the culture of the Hellenistic era, though it was propagated under the imperial auspices and ambitions of Alexander, was *sui generis*. Hellenism, then, “is not just a description of a type of culture, but a process” in which various cultural, social and political elements fused together⁽⁶¹⁾. This fact is well demonstrated in the fact that several distinct traits of the Hellenistic empire, such as its particular form of land tenure, absolute monarchy as the chief political form, the cult of the divine ruler as the locus of patriotism, and the professionalization of military and civil officers were major depar-

reflecting the Greek deity *Gea* (GITIN et al., “A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron”, 11-12). Aaron Demsky, however, prefers the reading *ptnyh*, reading the middle letter as an aborted nun, and not a gimel (A. DEMSKY, “The Name of the Goddess of Ekron: A New Reading”, *JANES* 47 [1997] 4)

⁽⁵⁹⁾ STERN, *Archaeology*, 227. The term appears as early as the 14th century, in Mycenaean inscriptions, and as late as texts from the 3rd century BCE. Quite often, it is used in conjunction with the name of a specific goddess, but it is also often used as a term of veneration, or as a title (DEMSKY, “The Name of the Goddess”, 4)

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Ibid., 4.

⁽⁶¹⁾ L. GRABBE, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (Minneapolis, MN 1992) I, 165.

tures from Classical Greek culture⁽⁶²⁾ produced in a matrix of mutual cultural interaction⁽⁶³⁾.

Furthermore, the cultural, political and intellectual forces that led to Hellenism were not rooted solely in Greece. The Persian Empire, through its non-Semitic nature, and numerical minority status, undermined older political institutions. Thus, it brought about greater political centrality and caused a revolution in world economy that allowed the propagation of Hellenism⁽⁶⁴⁾. “Hellenization”, then, either during the age of Hellenism, or Greek influence from earlier, cannot be seen simply as the adaptation and imitation of Greek culture⁽⁶⁵⁾. Indeed, “[Hellenization] cannot be measured only by the extent to which the peoples and cultures of [the Near East] were drawn to this one regnant culture”⁽⁶⁶⁾, nor was it simply a one-way exchange, “for the East left its mark, as well”⁽⁶⁷⁾. Ultimately, the phenomenon of Hellenism is to be viewed as a complex of interactions between Greek, Asian, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Levantine and Persian influences. These subtle but important dimensions of Greek contact with the Near East establish the likelihood that the shared idea of the golden mean need not be of Greek origin, but of Eastern origin.

The bias towards a Hellenistic dating for Qoheleth, based on the presence of the golden mean, is further problematic in light of Qoheleth’s linguistic data. Evidence regarding the presence and absence of foreign influence shows that the language of the text is “a vernacular, specifically, the everyday language of the Persian period”⁽⁶⁸⁾. More specifically, the presence of two Persian loan words⁽⁶⁹⁾, the presence and specific, technical use of several

⁽⁶²⁾ M. SMITH, *Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament* (New York 1971) 75-78. The author notes that with the exception of more a centralized legal system, most of the political and cultural institutions of the Hellenistic empire was derived from the empires of the Near East and not the city-states of ancient Greece.

⁽⁶³⁾ A more contemporary type of this phenomenon, where two cultures blend to form a novel culture, may be seen in the development of the Anglo-Indian culture during the British colonization of India, or the “Westernization” of many Asian nations after World War II (GRABBE, *Judaism*, I, 167-8).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ SMITH, *Palestinian Parties*, 74-6.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ GRABBE, *Judaism*, I, 165.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ L. LEVINE, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity*. Conflict or Confluence? (Seattle, WA 1998) 18.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Ibid., 19.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ C. L. SEOW, “The Dating of Qoheleth”, *JBL* 115 (1996) 666.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ פֶּרֶס and פֶּתִיגָה, *ibid.*, 646-650.

Aramaisms that are representative of the economic vocabulary of the Persian period⁽⁷⁰⁾, and the complete absence of Grecisms, in the form of either loan-words or phrasal idioms that were often held to be of Greek origin⁽⁷¹⁾ support this thesis. Further, the language of the text is characteristic of *late Biblical* Hebrew, not *Late* Hebrew, undermining the argument that it represents Mishnaic or Rabbinic stylings⁽⁷²⁾. On this basis, a date between the second half of the 5th century and the first half of the 4th century is suggested⁽⁷³⁾. A counter proposal has been offered, though, which focuses on the use of an Aramaic root שָׁלַח. It has been demonstrated that the specific use of this root in Qoheleth is not limited to the Persian era, but is present in the Hellenistic era, as well⁽⁷⁴⁾, so that “the debate on the date of the Book of Ecclesiastes cannot be considered closed”⁽⁷⁵⁾. There is still much linguistic evidence, however, that seems to favor a Persian dating. Though this may not be enough to close the debate over the date of Qoheleth, it does strongly suggest that a Hellenistic dating for Qoheleth be approached with some reservation.

IV. The Golden Mean in Other Literature

Finally, the presence of unique and independent presentations of the golden mean precludes a solely Greek origin for that doctrine. There are at least two distinct Near Eastern works that reflect an idea of moderation. The *Proverbs of Ahiqar*, a distinctly Semitic⁽⁷⁶⁾ work dating to the 7th or 6th century BCE⁽⁷⁷⁾ includes a proverbial section which reads:

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Ibid., 650-654.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Ibid., 657-660. Seow undercuts the argument that such idioms as “under the sun”, “see the sun”, “to do well”, etc. are of Greek origin.

⁽⁷²⁾ Ibid., 660-665.

⁽⁷³⁾ Ibid., 666.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Seow notes that the root שָׁלַח in Qoheleth has a technical sense of “having the right of disposal” and that this usage is limited to the Persian period (ibid., 653). Rudman demonstrates, though, that this technical use of the root is also attested in the Hellenistic period. (D. RUDMAN, “A Note on the Dating of Ecclesiastes”, *CBQ* 61 [1999] 52).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ RUDMAN, “A Note on the Dating of Ecclesiastes”, 52.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ J. LINDENBERGER, “Ahiqar”, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. CHARLESWORTH) (New York 1985) 481. Lindenberger notes that the language of the text lends evidence for a North Syrian origin, while the proverbial section of the text shows evidence for an Aramaic original.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Ibid., 479.

Do not remove you(rself) from wisdom and [let] n[ot = lest]
 Do not be overly clever [and] let not (=lest) [your...] be extinguished
 (Or: Do not gaze overmuch [and] not let {lest} [your] vi[sion] be
 dimmed.)
 Do not be too sweet and [let] them not (= lest they) swallow you.
 Do not be bitter [and let them not (= lest they) spit you out] (⁷⁸).

This work was one of the best known and most widely disseminated works in the Near East (⁷⁹), and of distinctly Semitic origin, and so, there is no need to postulate a Greek influence that may have carried this idea to Qoheleth. The idea of moderation is also reflected in the Egyptian work *The Instruction of the Vizier Ptah-Hotep*, dating to Middle Kingdom Egypt. A part of the instructions state “Take counsel with the ignorant as well as the wise” (⁸⁰). A latter portion of the text also reads “Greater is the respect for the mild (than) for the strong” (⁸¹).

There are also two sources from the Far East that place a heavy emphasis on the golden mean. The first is found in the teachings of Buddhism. A collection of the teachings of the Buddha, called “The Sermon at Benares”, details the lifestyle of the Tathagata (⁸²), the perfect one, who is the individual who lives by the middle path (⁸³). The Buddha states:

There are two extremes...which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow – the habitual practice, on the one hand, of self-indulgence which is unworthy vanity and fit only for the worldly-minded — and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable (⁸⁴).

The founder of the movement, the prince Sidahhata Gautama, shares remarkable biographical details with the textual presentation of the “life” of Qoheleth (⁸⁵), in particular in the manner in which the

(⁷⁸) Lines 61-64 of Column Ten. Translation from B. PORTEN and A. YARDENI, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Egypt* (Winona Lake, IN 1993) III, 45.

(⁷⁹) LINDENBERGER, “Ahiqar”, 480. The work remained popular into the Christian era, with versions being published in Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Russian and Serbian, among others.

(⁸⁰) “The Instruction of the Vizier Ptah Hotep”, translated by J. Wilson (ANET, 412).

(⁸¹) *The Teachings of Buddha* (ed. P. CAIRNS) (New York 1998) 132.

(⁸²) Ibid., 132. The “Tathagata” is often a term used as the highest attribute of the Buddha.

(⁸³) Ibid., 43.

(⁸⁴) Ibid.

(⁸⁵) The prince Siddahata Gautama, later to be known as the Buddha, lived from 560 to 480 BC. The development of the religion came shortly after his death,

Buddha comes to his teachings. Just as Qoheleth experienced firsthand the bitterness of life, and the ineffectiveness of traditional wisdom's view on righteousness and wickedness, likewise, the Buddha experienced both the extravagant lifestyle of a rich man, and the destitute life of a beggar, and counsels that neither is appropriate for the one who seeks piety, recognizing that his tradition was unable to deal with either extreme. Further, the Buddha echoes Qoheleth's bleak outlook on life, stating "Look about and contemplate life. Everything is transient and nothing endures" ⁽⁸⁶⁾. In teaching moderation, then, the Buddha, like Qoheleth, sees balance as a necessity for religious devotion. For the latter, it leads to the proper demonstration of the fear of God. For the former, "the middle way is a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads...to Nirvana" ⁽⁸⁷⁾.

Confucian philosophy also espouses an idea of the golden mean, and in fact, holds it in such high regard, that the doctrine of the golden mean is one of the Four Major Books of Confucian thought⁽⁸⁸⁾. Konzig, known to the West as Confucius (550 to 479 BC), regarded the golden mean, *chung yung*, as the perfect virtue, and the solution to societal ills⁽⁸⁹⁾. Further, Confucius applied the mean to theories of government and social practice⁽⁹⁰⁾, and much of his pedagogy focused on the mean⁽⁹¹⁾.

with the first set of major councils, held to rehearse and commit his teachings to memory, held shortly after his death He was born a prince and "there was no rival among the youths and men of India who could surpass him in any test, bodily or mental". He is also credited with keen observational skills, so that he saw "with his mental eye all the misery and sorrow of the world" and "the pains of pleasure and the inevitable certainty of death that hovers over every being" (ibid., 14, 19).

⁽⁸⁶⁾Ibid., 1.

⁽⁸⁷⁾Ibid., 44.

⁽⁸⁸⁾J. CHENG, *Confucius as Teacher* (Petaling Jaya, Malaysia 1993) 291.

⁽⁸⁹⁾"The master said, 'Perfect is the virtue which is according to its mean. Rare for a long time has been its practice among the people'" (*The Analects*, 6,27. Translation from CHENG, *Confucius*, 286). Also, "A Superior Man of the world...does not insist on doing anything or abstaining from anything, he stops at what is right and proper (the Mean)" (*The Analects* 4, 10. Translation from ibid., 288).

⁽⁹⁰⁾In matters of government, Confucius emphasized governmental control of public policy, but also advocated what might now be termed laissez-faire policy. Likewise, Confucius emphasized an individual's social obligations, as well as the individual consciences, economic condition and personality (ibid., 289).

⁽⁹¹⁾"Much of the effort of Confucius in teaching his disciples was spent to keep them in the Mean". *The Analects*, 11,21 recounts an episode where two

A consideration of the nature of Hellenism, the linguistic data of Qoheleth, and the presence of the golden mean in other cultures reveals that the idea of the golden mean is not isolated in the Hellenistic Age, nor is it limited to the Greek realm. As evidenced by the *Proverbs of Ahiqar*, and the *Instructions of the Vizier Ptah-Hotep*, the golden mean may have had distinct, Near Eastern manifestations. But, as evidenced by the teachings of Buddha and Confucius, the golden mean had a strong presence in the Oriental philosophies. The idea of the golden mean, then, is not limited to one thought system or locale, but is reflective of a universal human concern for life and its travails formulated in a uniquely theistic/Yahwistic matrix. Just as Qoheleth's golden mean warns the reader against over-reliance on one extreme of life, so it seems that scholarship must also be aware of viewing one realm and one civilization as the source for all philosophical innovation.

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SUMMARY

Two issues surrounding the doctrine of the golden mean in Qoh 7,15-18 are addressed. First, a review and critique of previous research demonstrates that the passage indeed supports the golden mean, and does not present a theological problem to the reader. Secondly, the view that the golden mean is a Hellenistic product is challenged by considering: (1) the dating and (2) nature of cultural exchange between Greece and the Near East; (3) linguistic data indicating an early date of composition for Qoheleth; and (4) the presence of Near Eastern and Eastern ideas of the golden mean. These four factors demonstrate that the golden mean in Qoheleth likely is not of Greek origin from the time of Alexander the Great, but is likely a universal phenomenon.

students posed questions regarding an identical course of action each sought to take. One, he counseled to seek advice from his family, while to the other, he counseled to move ahead with the course of action. When another student asked why he gave conflicting advice, Confucius responded by noting that one student was slow and needed to be pushed forward, while another was very energetic, and needed to be held back (ibid., 287).

Economic Plunder as a Leitmotif in LXX-Isaiah

A sure sign that an ancient translator was influenced by ideas extrinsic to his source text is a motif that recurs in multiple passages whose Hebrew, as understood in the light of contemporary scholarship, does not support that theme. Such a motif both reveals a facet of the translator's ideology and sheds light on his translation method.

In the Septuagint of Isaiah one such leitmotif, yet to receive adequate attention⁽¹⁾, is the financial plunder endured by the people at the hands of their rulers. This theme is prominent in at least five passages: 3,12-15; 5,5-7, 16-17; 6,11-13; and 9,3-4.

While the suggestion that the Isaiah translator was influenced by an idea extrinsic to his source text accords with his well-deserved reputation for translating “freely”, only examination of the relationship between his translation and his (reconstructed) *Vorlage* can prove such influence by showing how that idea governed his grammatical and lexical choices.

I. Isaiah 3,12-15

The motif of economic plunder first becomes apparent in the translation of 3,12-15b⁽²⁾.

¹²λαός μου, οἱ πράκτορες ὑμῶν καλαμῶνται ὑμᾶς,
καὶ οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες κυριεύουσιν ὑμῶν·
λαός μου, οἱ μακαρίζοντες ὑμᾶς πλανῶσιν ὑμᾶς
καὶ τὴν τρίβον τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν ταράσσουσιν.
¹³ἀλλὰ νῦν καταστήσεται εἰς κρίσιν κύριος
καὶ στήσει εἰς κρίσιν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ

⁽¹⁾ I.L. Seeligmann gives only passing notice to the translator's use of ἀπαιτεῖν for “creditors” in 3,12 and 9,4 (*The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* [Leiden 1948] 104), as does J. Lust (“Messianism in the Septuagint: Isaiah 8:23B-9:6 (9:1-7)”, *Interpretation of the Bible* [ed. J. KRASOVEC] [Ljubljana – Sheffield 1998] 159). Others who have treated the passages studied here have not traced the connections between them (e.g. F. RAURELL, “«Archontes» en la Interpretació Midràshica d'Is-LXX”, *RCatT* 1 [1976] 334-56; J. C. M. DAS NEVES, *A Teologia da Tradução Grega dos Setenta no Livro de Isaías* [Lisbon, 1973] 96).

⁽²⁾ G lacks the phrase יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֵלֵינוּ in v. 15c.

- ¹⁴αὐτὸς κύριος εἰς κρίσιν ἤξει μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῦ λαοῦ
καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτοῦ
Ἵμεῖς δὲ τί ἐνεπυρίσατε τὸν ἀμπελώνά μου
καὶ ἡ ἀρπαγὴ τοῦ πτωχοῦ ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις ὑμῶν;
¹⁵τί ὑμεῖς ἀδικεῖτε τὸν λαόν μου
καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον τῶν πτωχῶν κατασιχύνετε;
¹²My people, your tax collectors glean you,
and (your) creditors rule over you.
My people, those who bless you deceive you,
And the path of your feet they trouble.
¹³But now the Lord will appoint for judgment
and will station for judgment his people.
¹⁴The Lord himself will come for judgment with the elders of the
people and with its rulers.
But as for you, why did you burn my vineyard,
And (why) is the pillage of the poor person in your houses?
¹⁵Why do you afflict my people,
and (why) do you put to shame the face of the poor?

Especially revealing is the translation of נגשו by οἱ πράκτορες ὑμῶν⁽³⁾, the sole occurrence of πράκτωρ in the LXX⁽⁴⁾. Ziegler notes that in the papyri πράκτωρ designates a civil office⁽⁵⁾, while Moulton and Milligan specify that “the πράκτωρ in Ptolemaic times was specially concerned with the exaction of fines or payments”⁽⁶⁾.

⁽³⁾ While ὑμῶν might well reflect נגשו (rather than נגשו) in G’s *Vorlage* (with ὑμῶν expressing the collective 2ms suffix — cf. οἱ μακαρίζοντες ὑμᾶς || מאשריך, τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν || ארצהך), it is also possible that the translator adjusted the pronoun under influence of עמי (understood as a vocative), since elsewhere he altered pronouns to produce homogeneity (cf. 3,7, where ἔσομαι ἀρχηγός || קצין תשימי is likely due to the parallelism with Οὐκ ἔσομαί σου ἀρχηγός || לא אהיה הבש earlier in the verse). Similarly, while (κυριεύουσιν) ὑμῶν might reflect כך for בו, and πλανῶσιν ὑμᾶς might attest מזהעך instead of מהעם (*kaph/mem* confusion in Paleo-Hebrew), the translator’s tailoring of pronouns elsewhere suggests he might have created these differences. He was certainly responsible for supplying ὑμᾶς as the direct object of καλαμώνται.

⁽⁴⁾ נגש is rendered variously in LXX-Isa. In 14,2 נגשו is translated with οἱ κυριεύσαντες αὐτῶν, while in 60,17 נגש is translated τοὺς ἀρχοντάς σου (G’s *Vorlage* suffered transposition of נגש and פקדה). On the other hand, in 9,4 (3) נגש is represented by τῶν ἀπαιτούντων (see below), while in 14,4 נגש is represented by ὁ ἀπαιτῶν.

⁽⁵⁾ J. ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias* (Münster 1934) 200.

⁽⁶⁾ J. H. MOULTON – G. MILLIGAN, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-Literary Sources* (Grand Rapids 1930) 533.

The reasoning behind the translator's use of *πράκτωρ* is disclosed by his choice of *καὶ οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες* for *וְנָשִׁים*, based on construing *נָשִׁים* as a participle from *נָשָׂה* (= נָשָׂא). In that light, *οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες* denotes "those who demand payment", a meaning *ἀπαιτεῖν* bears in the papyri, where it is frequently used for the collection of taxes (⁷). Thus, the translation of *נָשִׁים* by *πράκτορες* (parallel to *οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες* for *נָשִׁים*) reflects the Hellenistic system of tax collection, revealing that the translator cast these abusive rulers as "tax farmers" (⁸).

While *καλαμώνται* reflects the translator's association of *מְעוֹלָה* with *עוֹלָלוֹת*, "gleanings" (cf. 24,13), that choice was equally studied, given the variety of equivalents for *עוֹלָלוֹת* earlier in the chapter (*καὶ ἐμπαίχεται* for *וְהַעֲלִיחַ* in v. 4 [cf. 66,4]; *μετὰ ἀνομίας* for *וּמַעֲלִיחָם* in v. 8 (⁹); *τῶν ἔργων* for *מַעֲלִיחָם* in v. 10). This translation, no doubt encouraged by the mention of the vineyard in v. 14, creates a striking metaphor in which (as Ottley observed) *καλαμώνται* approaches "the sense of English 'fleece'" (¹⁰). The picture is of a people unduly taxed under the rule of tax farmers (¹¹).

Thus, while v. 12 in the MT demeans Judah's officials for childish behavior and ridicules as "women" those misleading the people, the LXX depicts leaders who are guilty of imposing onerous taxes, behavior also referred to as "troubling the paths of this people" (¹²).

(⁷) MOULTON – MILLIGAN, *Vocabulary*, 52. ZIEGLER reports that *ἀπαιτητής* in the papyri designates a tax collector (*Untersuchungen*, 200). Cf. R.R. Ottley's translation of *οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες κυριεύουσιν ὑμῶν*: "the tax gatherers shall lord it over you" (*The Book of Isaiah According to the Septuagint* [Cambridge 1904] I, 73).

(⁸) See M. HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism*, (Philadelphia 1974) I, 18-23.

(⁹) As Seeligmann suggested, this is likely based on *מעל*, as in 1 Chr 9,1; 10,13 (*Version*, 54).

(¹⁰) OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 118.

(¹¹) Raurell sees this verse, which he calls "the most targumic or midrashic of the whole chapter", as defining *ἐμπαίχεται*, the epithet applied to these rulers in v. 4, in as much as they fail to show correct esteem for the Lord and his people ("«Archontes»" 346). DAS NEVES likewise perceives here a characterization of the rulers as seeking "to pervert the faithful class who follow the paths of justice" (*A Teologia*, 76).

(¹²) The translator characteristically renders *בלע* with *καταπίνω* (9,16; 16,8; 25,8; 28,4; 49,19), while he employs *τάρσσω* erratically, using it 12x, but never more than once for any Hebrew word and sometimes with an opaque relationship to the word in the MT (e.g. for *צָדִיק* in 24,14; *הַחֲרָעָה* in 24,19; *לְהַנְפֹּחַ* in 30,28). Accordingly, it is likely that he chose *τάρσσω* for *בלע* in 3,12 to resolve the oblique metaphor of "devouring the way of your paths".

Their oppressive reign will come to a dramatic end, however, according to v. 13. While the MT simply juxtaposes its descriptions of inept rulers and judgment⁽¹³⁾, the LXX subjoins the judgment scene in a more nuanced way by means of ἀλλὰ νῦν. Even if this phrase should reflect a ו prefixed to נצב in G's *Vorlage*, the translator's choice of ἀλλὰ νῦν strikingly introduces the reversal of conditions in the judgment of the rulers⁽¹⁴⁾.

Whereas in the MT the Lord stands to judge peoples (עמים), in G he appoints and stations⁽¹⁵⁾ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ for judgment (probably reflecting עמו in G's *Vorlage*)⁽¹⁶⁾. Although εἰς κρίσιν (for both לדין and לדן) might suggest the Lord marshals his people in preparation for passing judgement on them, v. 14 takes us in a different direction.

The representation of יהודה במשפט יבוא by κύριος εἰς κρίσιν ἥξει μετά shows that the translator had constructed a coherent idea of the action in these verses. While the translation of every other occurrence of this idiom in the LXX connotes entering into litigation⁽¹⁷⁾, this Greek phrase means something different⁽¹⁸⁾.

First, since both occurrences of εἰς κρίσιν in v. 13 mean “for judgment”, εἰς κρίσιν here most likely carries the same meaning⁽¹⁹⁾. Second, the translation of יבוא with ἥξει (rather than εἰσερχεσθαι or

⁽¹³⁾ Indeed, in the MT judgment is not even directed against the rulers of v. 12, but against עמים. Even if we were to adopt עמו instead (based on G and S), it is not clear that the judgment of v. 13 is to be associated with v. 12.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Cf. διότι νῦν in 3,8 and 47,9; διὰ τοῦτο in 8,15; καὶ νῦν in 2,5 and 26,11. Cf. especially νῦν δέ in 14,15; 33,4; 47,9, where in each case it has been supplied by the translator to signal a reversal of conditions.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Given the awkwardness of the transitive verbs καταστήσεται and στήσει in G's scene, it seems likely that its *Vorlage* read יצב for נצב and ויעמד for ועמד; it seems unlikely G would have concocted this awkward element in the action.

⁽¹⁶⁾ As G. B. Gray suggested, the MT's עמים has “arisen from the desire to turn the particular judgment of Israel into a world judgment” (*The Book of Isaiah*. ICC [Edinburgh 1912] 69). The likelihood that G's *Vorlage* read עמו rather than עמים finds support in S's חכמה ל, especially since S does not follow G's interpretation of these verses in other respects.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Elsewhere, this phrase is translated: μὴ εἰσέλθῃς εἰς κρίσιν μετά (Ps 142[143],2), εἰσελθεῖν ἐν κρίματι ἐνώπιόν (Job 14,3), καὶ συνεισελεύσεται σοι εἰς κρίσιν (Job 22,4), ἄξει ὁ θεὸς ἐν κρίσει (Qoh 11,9), ἄξει ἐν κρίσει (Qoh 12,14).

⁽¹⁸⁾ As A. Aejmelaeus reasons, it is in the use of non-standard equivalents that the intention of a translator becomes evident (“Translation Technique and the Intention of the Translator”, *VII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* [ed. C.E. Cox] [Atlanta 1989] 28-30).

⁽¹⁹⁾ It is impossible to determine whether the translator's *Vorlage* read למשפט במשפט.

the like [cf. n. 17]) connotes the Lord's *arrival* to execute judgment. Consequently, αὐτὸς κύριος εἰς κρίσιν ἥξει signals a judgment theophany: "the Lord himself shall come for judgment" ⁽²⁰⁾.

While αὐτός might reflect אָו in G's *Vorlage*, more likely it was supplied by the translator. Just as he marked the reversal of affairs with ἀλλὰ νῦν at the beginning of v. 13, his interpolation of αὐτός spotlights the Lord's arrival to effect a reversal by judging the rulers.

The representation of the suffix of וְשָׂרֵי with αὐτοῦ indicates the translator perceived its antecedent as עַמּוֹ rather than יְהוָה (for which ἐαυτοῦ would be expected). Thus, τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῦ λαοῦ and τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτοῦ are those the Lord judges rather than those accompanying him ⁽²¹⁾; they are the rulers who "fleece" the people.

While τὸν ἀμπελῶνα μου might reflect כֶּרְמִי for הַכֶּרֶם in G's *Vorlage*, the translator's accent on the indictment of the wicked rulers could just as easily have prompted him to insert the possessive pronoun ⁽²²⁾, opposite Ὑμεῖς at the start of the accusation ⁽²³⁾.

Moreover, while ἀρπαγή at first blush seems a suitable match for גָּזַל, it is at least noteworthy that everywhere else גָּזַל appears in the Bible, the LXX renders it with ἄρπαγμα (Lev 5,23; Ezek 18,7, 12, 16; 33,15), a word LXX-Isa uses to render גָּזַל in 61,8 ⁽²⁴⁾. At the same time, the Isaiah translator uses ἀρπαγή in the sense of "plunder" in 10,2, the only other occurrence of ἀρπαγή in LXX-Isaiah, where εἰς ἀρπαγὴν translates שָׁלַל and stands parallel to εἰς πρνομήν (for יָבוֹ). These data suggest that the translator chose ἀρπαγή in 3,14 with a view to the *act* of plundering rather than the goods plundered.

These observations suggest the translator understood the metaphor of the burned vineyard in light of the description of the people as economically plundered by οἱ πράκτορες / οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες.

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. the theophany of 4,5 (καὶ ἥξει ἡ ὀρθρία), although it is likely due to a *Vorlage* that read וְיָבִיא (cf. one de Rossi manuscript: וְיָבִיא) or וְיָבִיא (cf. 1QIs^a: וְיָבִיא).

⁽²¹⁾ μετὰ before τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτοῦ might reflect a second עַם in G's *Vorlage*, inserted to enhance the parallelism, although it is equally possible the translator supplied it for the same reason.

⁽²²⁾ Similarly, while τί before ἐνεπύρισατε might reflect לָמָּה after וְאַתָּה, the translator might well have supplied it to correspond to τί in v. 15 (מִלִּכְּחַם) (no interrogative pronoun or particle is found in 1QIs^a or S, while V translates וְאַתָּה with *vos enim*).

⁽²³⁾ Cf. v. 6, where the opposition τὸ ὑπὸ σὲ ἔστω led the translator to render מִלִּפְנֵי with τὸ ἐμὸν.

⁽²⁴⁾ The translator also uses ἄρπαγμα in 44,22: ὁ ἐξαπρούμενος ἄρπαγμα ἢ מִצִּיל מִשָּׁחָה.

Because in v. 13 the Lord stations the people for judgment, and yet those arraigned are the rulers, the stationing of the people is but a prelude to the rulers' arraignment⁽²⁵⁾, meaning that the people fill the role of victims rather than malfeasants. It is, then, towards the abusive rulers that the questions of v. 15 are directed.

In continuing the charges against those who have mistreated the people, the translator represented דכּא by ἄδικεῖτε, the lone occurrence of this equivalence in the LXX. While דכּא ("crush") was probably unfamiliar to him⁽²⁶⁾, his choice of ἄδικεῖν for דכּא is likely more than arbitrary, since (as Seeligmann observed) for LXX-Isa ἄδικεῖν is a "special wellnigh (sic) technical term, to express, without any direct sanction from the Hebrew text, the violence from which Israel was made to suffer by other peoples"⁽²⁷⁾. Even if those taken to task here are native rulers, this use of ἄδικεῖν fits the pattern Seeligmann noted, insofar as this is a case of violence against Israel⁽²⁸⁾.

The other noteworthy element is the translation of דכּא by κατασχύνετε. In 47,2 G renders דכּא with ἄλεσον ἄλευρον ("grind meal"), comporting with equivalents for דכּא elsewhere in the LXX⁽²⁹⁾. Ziegler justifiably concludes that the translator chose κατασχύνειν (as well as ἄδικεῖν) because "die Bilder sind wohl...dem griech. Übersetzer zu real und derb vorgekommen"⁽³⁰⁾.

⁽²⁵⁾ Raurell overlooks these signals and thus constructs an artificial scheme in which τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ of v. 13 designates "the powerful ones of the people", while τοῦ λαοῦ in vv. 14 designates the poor ("Archontes", 350).

⁽²⁶⁾ In 53,10 he connects דכּא with Aramaic דכּא (καθαρίσαι αὐτόν), as does T. And while G translates דכּא לִבְנֵי דִּכְּרֵי with καὶ διδοὺς ζῶην τοῖς συντετριμμένοις τὴν καρδίαν in 57,15, the translation of דכּא וְשֹׁפָר as καὶ ὀλιγοψύχοις διδοὺς μακροθυμίαν earlier in the verse raises questions about the translator's knowledge of דכּא, "to crush". This translator was not alone in his *aporia*. A perusal of equivalents in other books suggests דכּא posed problems for all LXX translators.

⁽²⁷⁾ SEELIGMANN, *Version*, 42. Cf. RAURELL, "Archontes", 342.

⁽²⁸⁾ Cf. J. Coste, who notes that "la version grecque d'Isaïe connaît les ἄδικήσαντες, c'est-à-dire les ennemis du peuple saint pris comme un tout", citing 20,20; 51,23; 65,25; and directing the reader to compare 3,15 ("Le texte Grec d'Isaïe xxv:1-5", *RB* 61 [1954] 53).

⁽²⁹⁾ ἄλεῖν is the Attic form corresponding to ἀλήθειν, which is used for דכּא in Num 11,8; Judg 16,21; Qoh 12,3, and for דכּא in Qoh 12,4. The compound form καταλεῖν appears in Exod 32,20 and Deut 9,21.

⁽³⁰⁾ ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen*, 81.

Given his selection of ἀδικεῖν for the unfamiliar נָכַח, the translator settled on κατασχύνειν as a comparable action⁽³¹⁾.

The cumulative effect of the translator's maneuvers in 3,12-15 is to describe Israel's rulers as "fleecing" the people through heavy taxation, metaphorically depicted as "burning my vineyard", but also described concretely as ἀρπαγή. Such oppressors will be judged, via a theophany, for doing violence to God's people.

II. Isaiah 9,3-4

9,3-4 contains a striking reprise of the theme of the people wrongly deprived of goods by tax collectors who will, in turn, reap punishment:

³διότι ἀφήρηται ὁ ζυγὸς ὁ ἐπ' αὐτῶν κείμενος
καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος ἡ ἐπὶ τοῦ τραχήλου αὐτῶν
τὴν γὰρ ῥάβδον τῶν ἀπαιτούντων
διεσκέδασεν κύριος ὡς τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐπὶ Μαδιαμ
⁴ὅτι πᾶσαν στολὴν ἐπισυνηγμένην δόλω
καὶ ἱμάτιον μετὰ καταλλαγῆς ἀποτείσουσιν
καὶ θελήσουσιν εἰ ἐγενήθησαν πυρίκαυστοι

³Because the yoke which lay upon them has been removed,
and the rod which was upon their neck;
for the rod of the creditors
the Lord broke as on the day which was against Midian.

⁴For every robe mixed with guile,
and a garment (attained) with extortion³² they will repay,
and they will wish they (themselves) had been consumed by fire.

The translator's path from his *Vorlage* to his rendering can be reconstructed with reasonable certainty. On the one hand, his translation of נָכַח מַשְׁחָה by [καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος] ἡ ἐπὶ τοῦ τραχήλου αὐτῶν⁽³³⁾ suggests that [ὁ ζυγὸς] ὁ ἐπ' αὐτῶν κείμενος is his guess for

⁽³¹⁾ On at least two other occasions the translator appealed to forms of αἰσχύνη when faced with difficulties. In 28,16 G translates שָׁחַח מַשְׁחָה with καὶ ὁ πιστευὼν ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνηθῇ, while in 47,10 its translation of שָׁחַח מַשְׁחָה by σοι αἰσχύνη (cf. G's difficulty with שָׁחַח in 49,5; 57,17) evinces how close at hand the notion of shame was for the translator.

⁽³²⁾ According to Ziegler, καταλλαγή was used in the papyri to designate an exorbitant price (*Untersuchungen*, 195).

⁽³³⁾ For τραχήλου αὐτῶν || נָכַח cf. 10,27. The representation of the 3ms suffix by αὐτῶν was determined by εὐφρανθήσονται, v. 2.

סבלו [את על], a noun apparently unfamiliar to him⁽³⁴⁾. On the other hand, he probably supplied ἀφήρηται in light of the like phrases in 10,27 and 14,25 (see n. 34).

On the other hand, his supply of γάρ indicates he saw the second half of the verse explaining the first: the yoke and the rod lying on the people has been removed, in as much as τὴν...ῥάβδον τῶν ἀπαιτούντων has been shattered⁽³⁵⁾.

The translator's rendering of הַגָּשָׁם by τῶν ἀπαιτούντων is striking, given what we witnessed in 3,12-15. While his *Vorlage* may have read הַגָּשָׁם (ligated בּוּ), his choice of ἀπαιτεῖν recalls his rendering of וַנִּשֵּׂי by καὶ οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες in 3,12, parallel to his translation of וַנִּשֵּׂי with οἱ πράκτορες. Given the talk of these ἀπαιτούντων repaying (ἀποτείσουσιν) garments gained deceitfully (δόλω)⁽³⁶⁾ and of exacting an exorbitant fee (μετὰ καταλλαγῆς)⁽³⁷⁾, τῶν ἀπαιτούντων doubtless denotes the same tax collectors described as the people's oppressors in chapter 3.

The "rod" of these tax collectors is said to have already been broken by the Lord. While one can perceive the translator's path from διεσκέδασεν to הַחֲתָה, his interpolation of κύριος as its subject is noteworthy, not simply because it requires a different grammatical person for הַחֲתָה (unless his *Vorlage* had suffered haplography of the final *taw*) but also because the assertion that the κύριος has acted against this group echoes the insistence of chapter 3 that the κύριος himself would judge the rulers who "gleaned" the people.

Accordingly, 9,3-4 provides further evidence that the motif of the people's economic plunder by their rulers guided the translator's interpretation of some passages.

III. Isaiah 5,16-17

Another measure of the influence of this idea on the translator is 5,16-17:

⁽³⁴⁾ As indicated by his rendering of סבלו with ὁ φόβος αὐτοῦ in 10,27 and τὸ κῦδος αὐτῶν in 14,25.

⁽³⁵⁾ Cf. LUST, "Messianism", 159.

⁽³⁶⁾ The choice of δόλω for ברעש (read as ברשע, as also in T) is revealing, since it specifies the kind of "wickedness" he saw at work in these dealings.

⁽³⁷⁾ As Ziegler suggests, the translation of ברמים by μετὰ καταλλαγῆς may be based on the late Hebrew use of רמים to denote a purchase price (*Untersuchungen*, 195).

- ¹⁶καὶ ὑψωθήσεται κύριος σαβαωθ ἐν κρίματι
καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἅγιος δοξασθήσεται ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ
¹⁷καὶ βοσκηθήσονται οἱ διηρπασμένοι ὡς ταῦροι
καὶ τὰς ἐρήμους τῶν ἀπηλειμμένων ⁽³⁸⁾ ἄρνες φάγονται
¹⁶And the Lord Sabaoth will be exalted in justice,
and the holy God will be glorified in righteousness.
¹⁷And those plundered shall feed like bulls,
and lambs shall feed on the desolate places of those eliminated.

While the translation of v. 16 accords with the MT's assertion that the Lord will be exalted "in judgment" and "in righteousness", v. 17 portrays a different effect of this exaltation. Whereas the MT asserts that, following the judgment forecast in v. 16, the lands of the rich will be grazed by lambs and "foreigners", G contraposes two classes: those who have been expelled and those who have suffered plunder⁽³⁹⁾.

While the majority of the translator's method in v. 17 is apparent⁽⁴⁰⁾, οἱ διηρπασμένοι, although it aligns with כבש, lacks a semantic equivalent, and no other version concurs with G. The translator shows his familiarity with כבש by rendering עב כבש with μετὰ ἄρνός in 11,6⁽⁴¹⁾, while none of the words he typically translates with "plunder" is graphically similar to כבש.

Ottley proposed that the translator construed כבש as the Qal passive participle of כבש⁽⁴²⁾. While we cannot assay the translator's knowledge of כבש, since that verb appears nowhere in Isaiah, all fourteen occurrences of כבש in the Bible are translated with equivalents much closer to the sense of כבש, none of them connoting "plunder"⁽⁴³⁾.

⁽³⁸⁾ I read ἀπηλειμμένων for Zielger's ἀπειλημμένων, based on Seeligmann's observation (following Schleusner and Ottley) that ἀπολείφειν is used for מחה in Isa 44,24, as well as Gen 6,7 and 4 Kgdms 21,13 (he notes that ἐξαλείφειν is also often used) (SEELIGMANN, *Version*, 11). The corruption of ἀπηλειμμένων to ἀπειλημμένων is easily explained as an itacism.

⁽³⁹⁾ Das Neves likewise finds a contraposition of two classes here, in his view they are (more generally) the faithful and the impious (*A Teologia*, 96).

⁽⁴⁰⁾ The translator evidently related מחים to מחה, since ἀπολείφειν ("to wipe out") translates מחה in 44,24. On the other hand, ὡς ταῦροι likely reflects כבשרם for כדברם in G's *Vorlage* (as suggested by OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 128), while ἄρνες suggests גרים stood in place of גרים, as is widely recognized.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Its lack of an equivalent for כבש in 1,11 is likely a case of collapsing a list, especially since he had rendered אירם by ἄρνων earlier in the verse.

⁽⁴²⁾ OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 128.

⁽⁴³⁾ All three occurrences of כבש in the Torah are translated by κατακυριεύειν (Gen 1,28; Num 32,22.29), while equivalents used elsewhere are βιάζεσθαι,

Thus, even if οἱ διηρηπασμένοι was derived by relating כבש כבשם to כבש, the choice of οἱ διηρηπασμένοι again reflects the translator's conviction that those to benefit from the Lord's judgment will be those who have suffered economically.

IV. Isaiah 6,13

The translator's attraction to the motif of economic plunder, with punishment for the perpetrators, illumines a peculiar equivalence in 6,13, where he renders לבער with εἰς πρνομήν. Even though πρνομή in Greek literature can mean "forage", the LXX generally, and the translator of Isaiah in particular, uses it to translate Hebrew words meaning "to plunder"⁽⁴⁴⁾, making that the meaning of πρνομή in this instance. Never outside Isaiah is בער translated by a Greek word meaning "plunder", while LXX-Isa typically translates it with Greek words meaning "to burn"⁽⁴⁵⁾.

G's translation seems based on contextual exegesis⁽⁴⁶⁾. Like the other versions, G struggles to understand the commission of vv. 9-10⁽⁴⁷⁾. In place of the MT's command to impose obduracy (v. 10) stands an explanation of v. 9's commission to futile proclamation:

ἐκβιάζειν, καταδύειν, καταδυναστεύειν, κατακυριεύειν, κραταιοῦν, κρατεῖν, and ὑποτάσσειν.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Πρνομή and πρνομεύειν are used to translate the following words throughout the LXX: בזל (31x), שלל (21x), שסס/שסה (8x), שבה (3x), חס (2x), and קרקר (1x, Num 24,17). This tendency to use πρνομή and πρνομεύειν with the meaning "plunder" is even more pronounced in LXX-Isa, which uses these words for (aside from בער in 5,5) בזל (10x), שלל (2x), and שסס/שסה (3x).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ ἐμπυρίζειν (3,14), καίειν, (9,17[16], 10,17; 30,27.33; 34,9; 62,1), ἐγκαίειν (50,11), κατακαίειν (1,31; 43,2), καύσις (4,4; 40,16; 44,15). In 19,11 he appropriately chooses μωράνειν, while בער in 42,25 is not represented.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ V and T also translate לבער exegetically. V resolved the enigma of the six final words of v. 13 by perceiving in them the image of a tree *extending* its branches: *sicut terebinthus et sicuti quercus quae expandit* (שלך < בשלכה) *ramos suos* Accordingly, Jerome represented לבער with *in ostensionem*, finding in v. 13 a promise that Israel will one day become *a display* as grand as the oak or terebinth that spreads its branches. T's interpretation is based not on the arbor image, but the preceding verse, where its construal of האדם as a collective determined the grammatical number of its verbs in v. 13 also (ויתובין ויהון, וישתאדון). Taking the people as the topic of the verse, it interpreted לבער as a *decimation* of people (אדם ויהון ויתובין ויהון לצרבה), avoiding the harsher image of people being "burned". (S translates לבער with למבגא. IQIs^a reads לבער [= MT].)

⁽⁴⁷⁾ See C.A. EVANS, "The Text of Isaiah 6,9-10", ZAW 94 (1982) 415-418.

¹⁰ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδία τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου,
καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν αὐτῶν βαρέως ἤκουσαν

¹⁰For the heart of this people became fat,
and with their ears they heard heavily.

In G, the people will not respond to Isaiah's proclamation because they are *already* obdurate (N.B. γάρ) ⁽⁴⁸⁾. Consequently, while the question of v. 11 is accurately translated ("Ἔως πότε κύριε), it means not "how long must I execute this mission?" (as in the MT), but "how long will the people remain obdurate?" The answer (as in the MT), is that this state of affairs will persist until the land lies desolate.

Even more significant differences follow in vv. 12-13:

¹²καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα μακρυνεῖ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους,
καὶ οἱ καταλειφθέντες πληθυνθήσονται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

¹³καὶ ἔτι ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἐστὶ τὸ ἐπιδέκατον,
καὶ πάλιν ἔσται εἰς προνομὴν ὡς τερέβινθος
καὶ ὡς βάλανος ὅταν ἐκπέσῃ ἀπὸ τῆς θήκης αὐτῆς

¹²And after these things, God will move the men afar,
and those who are left will multiply upon the land.

¹³And yet upon it is a tenth,
and again it shall be for plunder like a Terebinth
and like an oak, when it is deprived of its husk ⁽⁴⁹⁾.

As Seeligman observed, καὶ οἱ καταλειφθέντες πληθυνθήσονται shows the translator understood פְּנוּיָה not "in its abstract but in its concrete meaning (i.e. the community which was left behind and spared)", perhaps under the influence of passages such as 4,2-6 ⁽⁵⁰⁾. The translator then construed פְּנוּיָה as *waw* + verb, rendering it as grammatically plural (πληθυνθήσονται), coordinate to the meaning he found in פְּנוּיָה ⁽⁵¹⁾.

Given the translator's penchant for expounding the meaning of conjunctions (cf. ἀλλὰ νῦν in 3,13), καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα for the *waw* in פְּנוּיָה reflects the translator's perception that the land's depopulation (presaged in v. 11) would yield to a new state of affairs: after "the

⁽⁴⁸⁾ See J. LUST, "The Demonic Character of Jahweh and the Septuagint of Isaiah", *Bijdragen* 40 (1979) 5.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ For ἐκπίπτειν ἀπὸ as "deprived of" cf. 28,4: τὸ ἄνθος τὸ ἐκπεσὸν τῆς ἐλπίδος τῆς δόξης.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ SEELIGMANN, *Version*, 116.

⁽⁵¹⁾ This is similar to the translation of collective forms with the plural in 4,3 (ἄγιοι κληθήσονται || וְיִקְרָאוּ אֲמֹר לוֹ and οἱ γραφέντες || וְכָתוּב).

men” are removed afar⁽⁵²⁾, those left will thrive, a scenario strikingly similar to the one he divined in 5,17. The insertion of μετὰ ταῦτα shows the translator had developed a precise understanding of this reversal of fortunes in relation to the desolation described just prior to this.

In this light, the translator’s choices in v. 13 become clear. While all the actions of vv. 11-13 are yet future in the MT, the LXX, after describing desolation (v. 11) and portraying a day beyond that desolation (v. 12), turns to what it regards as *current* troubles, as indicated by its choice of ἐστὶ in translating the non-verbal clause. Thus, whereas the MT says that should a tenth part remain, it too will be destroyed, G posits that the tenth *now* remaining will be subject to plunder (εἰς προνομὴν || לבער). The translator seems to have inferred that v. 13’s talk of an extant “tenth part” must envision conditions *before* the desolation augured in v. 11, and thus must have in view the current state of affairs.

Three observations indicate that the translator chose εἰς προνομὴν for לבער based on the notion of the people’s financial ruin at the hands of their rulers. First, the use of the present tense in v. 13 indicates the translator deliberately resumed the theme of decimation imposed for the people’s obduracy (v. 11) that was interrupted by the anticipation for the future voiced in v. 12. The resultant description of the current plight as a “plundering” that will be redressed parallels 3,12-15 and 9,3-4.

Second, the connection between the removal of τοὺς ἀνθρώπους and a cessation of the decimation (v. 12) also recalls 3,12-15 and 5,16-17, where those who plundered the people are removed. Given this context, it is at least a reasonable conjecture that, for the translator, τοὺς ἀνθρώπους were equivalent to the rulers of 3,12.

Finally, while the simile of plundering ὡς τερέβινθος is obscure, ὡς βάλανος ὅταν ἐκπέσῃ /⁽⁵³⁾ ἀπὸ τῆς θήκης αὐτῆς forms a comparison apt for a people plundered: “like an acorn deprived of its

⁽⁵²⁾ The translation of הָאֲדָמָה by τοὺς ἀνθρώπους is due to a construal of אָדָם as collective, as also in v. 11 (παρὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἀνθρώπους || אָדָם יָחִיד).

⁽⁵³⁾ The translation of אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁלְכָתָהּ with ὅταν ἐκπέσῃ is probably based on the surrounding agrarian imagery rather than any lexical link, as suggested by the fact that the three other instances of ἐκπίπτειν in LXX-Isa are embedded in agrarian scenes (|| נָבַל in 28,1.4; 40,7; cf. Job 15,30). However, cf. Job 15,33, which uses ἐκπίπτειν for שָׁלַח.

husk”⁽⁵⁴⁾. This image is commensurate with the description of the people as “gleaned” in 3,12.

While these observations provide grounds for concluding that the translator’s choice of εἰς προνομὴν for לבער was determined by his fascination with the theme of economic plunder⁽⁵⁵⁾, the most convincing substantiation is provided by the only other verse in the LXX where r(b) is translated with a word meaning “plunder”, Isaiah 5,5.

V. Isaiah 5,5

ἄφελω τὸν φραγμὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται εἰς διαρπαγὴν,
καὶ καθελὼ τὸν τοῖχον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται εἰς καταπάτημα

⁵¹I will remove its wall and it shall be for plunder,
and I shall tear down its wall and it shall be for trampling.

While the translations of הָסַר by ἄφελω and of פָּרַץ by καθελὼ are due to target language concerns (cf. S, אָפֶלְוּ אָרְצָא; V, *auferam, diruam*; and T, אִתְּרַע, אֶסְלִיק)⁽⁵⁶⁾, the relationship between εἰς διαρπαγὴν and לבער is more opaque.

Strikingly, we find a similar semantic equivalent in the other versions: S reads לִבְאֵל רִחֲמֵנִי, while V has *et erit in direptionem*, and T reads וִיחֲוֶן לִיבִי. On these grounds we might be inclined to posit that G’s *Vorlage* contained לִבִּי rather than לבער⁽⁵⁷⁾.

However, while διαρπαγή and διαρπάζειν translate √בז elsewhere in the LXX (e.g. Num 14,3, 31), the translator of Isaiah never employs these equivalents for בז (58), preferring προνομή (10,2,6; 24,3; 33,23;

⁽⁵⁴⁾ βάλανος is likely not the oak tree, but the acorn, since in its only other occurrence (2,13) the translator combines it with δένδρον to specify the *tree*: δένδρον βαλάνου βασαν || אֱלֹהֵי הַבֶּשֶׁן ||. Seeligmann’s proposal that the choice of τῆς θήκης for מצבה (ה) was “rooted in the coagulated equation of מצבה with θήκη = gravestone, monument” (*Version*, 49) is unlikely, since θήκη does not bear that sense here. More probably it was chosen to designate the outer “case” of the acorn.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ As for the remainder of the verse, while some assume the translator’s *Vorlage* lacked קדש מצבה, זרע, the pronoun αὐτῆς, corresponding to the 3fs suffix of מצבה, and the absence of any representation of בם suggest rather that G’s *Vorlage* had suffered parablepsis of קדש זרע בם מצבת (homoioarchton).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ 1QIs^a reads אֶסֶר for הָסַר, but its פָּרַץ = MT.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ 1QIs^a reads בַּרַע וִיחֲוֶן for לבער. 5,5 falls in a lacuna in 1QIs^a, as well as in 4QpIs^a (4Q162).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ He uses διαρπαγή for מַשָּׁח in 42,24 and διαρπάζειν for סַחַח in 42,22, while using ἀρπαγή for גִּזְלָה in 3,14, and for שָׁלַל in 10,2, and choosing ἀρπαγμα

42,22) and $\pi\rho\nu\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ (8,3; 11,14; 24,3; 42,22.24)⁽⁵⁹⁾, thus making retroversion from $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\delta\iota\alpha\rho\pi\alpha\gamma\eta\nu$ to לבו dubious.

Moreover, while V, T and S use words equivalent to $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\delta\iota\alpha\rho\pi\alpha\gamma\eta\nu$, V's *in direptionem* likely derives from G⁽⁶⁰⁾, while T's לבו is attributable to its own exegetical tack in the passage⁽⁶¹⁾, and S seems driven to לבו by a similar logic⁽⁶²⁾. Accordingly, it is likely these versions reflect a common exegetical tack or even a common tradition of understanding לבער ⁽⁶³⁾.

On the other hand, it is difficult to perceive why the scribe of G's *Vorlage* (or its ancestor) would have deliberately altered לבער to לבו , given the image of burning a vineyard in 3,14. Moreover, corruption of לבער to לבו does not follow attested patterns of graphic confusion⁽⁶⁴⁾. While it is possible that an anomalous change occurred, we must consider other options, as well.

for גזל in 61,8 and משסה in 42,22. Other words translated as “plunder” are מלקח ($\sigma\kappa\upsilon\lambda\omicron\nu$ 49,24-25), שסה ($\pi\rho\nu\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ 10,13; 13,16; 17,14), and שלל ($\pi\rho\nu\nu\omicron\mu\eta$ 8,1; 33,23; $\sigma\kappa\upsilon\lambda\omicron\nu$ 8,4; 9,3[2]; 10,6; 33,4; 53,12; $\sigma\kappa\upsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ 8,3).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ He uses $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\nu\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$ once, in 17,14, although this is to avoid using $\pi\rho\nu\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ in adjacent clauses.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ V likely preserves the reading of the VL. Jerome sometimes retains the VL, since his aims in translating *iuxta Hebraeum* had more to do with the *sense* of the text than with precise philological equivalents (*Commentaires de Jerome sur le prophete Isaie*, Books I-IV [ed. R. GRYSO – P. A. DEPROOST – J. COULIE – E. CROUSSE] [Freiburg 1993] 50). Moreover, in Jerome's commentary on Isaiah, he explains this reading in the light of Psalm 34,8 as having to do with Jerusalem's plunder by its enemies (*Sancti Hieronymi Presbyteri Explanationum in Esaiaem*, II, 39, *Commentaires*, 271).

⁽⁶¹⁾ Most significant is T's interpretation of the metaphor לכרמי with לעמי (cf. למרמס as לכרמי for למרמס in בית מקדשהו). Although it remained apropos to translate לכרמי as “trampling” (since the subject was בית מקדשהו) it would have been quite harsh to render לבער as “burning”, since its implicit object was עמי . Having interpreted the vineyard as the people, T chose the more reserved image of “plunder”.

⁽⁶²⁾ The translator seems to have been stumped by משכחו , and so derived לכרמי from v. 2, where לכרמי represents מגדל and stands parallel to לכרמי , which he interpolated into v. 2 as the object of לכרמי , based on לכרמי in v. 5. לכרמי may have been his perception of an outcome suited to the destruction of a לכרמי , in which case לכרמי for לבער would reflect exegetical reasoning similar to T.

⁽⁶³⁾ By representing משכחו with שכינתי , T interprets these events as the removal of divine protection, as does Jerome, who comments on *et erit in direptionem* with, *et diripetur ab adversariis* (“and it will be plundered by foes”) (*In Esaiaem*, II, 39, *Commentaires*, 271).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ No extant Hebrew ms (even Medieval) attests לבו .

Ziegler suggests that the translator chose εἰς διαρπαγὴν in 5,5 based on the context, “entsprechend der Vorstellung, daß infolge des Niederreißens der Mauer die Möglichkeit einer Plünderung leicht gegeben ist”⁽⁶⁵⁾. And yet, in 3,14 the translator rendered כָּרַתָּם הַכֶּרֶם with ἐνεπυρίσατε τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου, in keeping with a common Hellenistic agricultural practice, as Ziegler notes⁽⁶⁶⁾. Why, then, would the translator have adopted such a different equivalent in 5,5?

In light of the evidence we have seen that the translator was predisposed to the theme of officials plundering the people, and given that:

(a) in 5:17 he renders כָּבַשׁוּ anomalously to introduce the theme of “plundered people” (using διαρπάζω, the verbal correlative of διαρπαγή), and

(b) in 3,14 he perceives the metaphor of burning “my vineyard” (= “my people”) as “plunder” (ἀρπαγή, cognate to διαρπαγή) carried out by οἱ πράκτορες and οἱ ἀπαιτοῦντες

it is reasonable to conclude that he chose εἰς διαρπαγὴν to render כָּרַתָּם for the demolition of the vineyard in 5,5 under the influence of the theme of economic plunder and under the impress of 3,14 in particular.

The translator’s rendering of v. 7 buttresses this conclusion:

ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι κρίσιν, ἐποίησε δὲ ἀνομίαν
καὶ οὐ δικαιοσύνην ἀλλὰ κραυγὴν

I waited (for it) to produce justice, but it produced lawlessness,
and not righteousness, but outcry.

The divergence from the MT most significant for this study is ἀνομίαν || מַשֵּׁפָה, which is more likely due to the translator’s unfamiliarity with מַשֵּׁפָה than to a variant reading in his *Vorlage* (e.g. מַפְשֵׁעַ)⁽⁶⁷⁾, especially since LXX-Isa frequently uses ἀνομία and ἄνομος for Hebrew words not translated by the ἀνομ- group elsewhere in the Bible⁽⁶⁸⁾. The translator may have selected ἀνομίαν as an

⁽⁶⁵⁾ ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen*, 180.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ “In den Papyri wird häufig davon gesprochen, daß die Felder und Weinberge ‘ausgebrannt’ werden (ἐμπυρίζειν, ἐμπυρισμός)” (ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen*, 180).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Cf. OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 124.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ ἀνομία || כִּרְהָה (1,5), פִּלְצוּת (21,4), בָּצַע (33,15), שָׁקַר (49,3); ἄνομος || כִּדִּיל (1,25), שָׁקַר (9,15[14]; 57,4), חֲנָף (10,6; 32,6), זָד (13,11), עֲרִיץ (29,20), כִּרְהָה (31,6), זִמָּה (32,7).

antonym to κρίσιν || משפט because he thereby could designate Israel's culpability for violating the νόμος⁽⁶⁹⁾. This is consistent with the perspective of 6,9-13, which interprets the "plundering" of the people as punishment for their obduracy.

The fact that ἀνομία is the crime that occasions the "plunder" of the vineyard supports the conclusion that the translator chose εἰς διαρπαγὴν in v. 5 based on his predilection for the theme of the economic plunder of the people, already described in 3,14 as the burning of "my vineyard" (= "my people") and as ἀρπαγή.

VI. Conclusion

The detection of a leitmotif within a translation requires establishing that it influenced the rendering of multiple, otherwise disconnected passages whose Hebrew provides inadequate basis for that theme. The detailed portrayal of the rulers as plundering the people in 3,12-15 correlates with the similar sketch of the problem besetting Israel in 6,11-13, where such plundering is portrayed as punishment for the people's obduracy (cf. 5,5). Moreover, the fate of those plundering the people in 3,12-15 and 6,11-13 corresponds to the way deliverance is described as freedom from economic oppressors in 9,3-4 and 5,16-17.

This leitmotif accords with the broad consensus that LXX-Isa was translated in the second quarter of the second century B.C.E., when Seleucid domination of Jerusalem and Judea was being thrown off⁽⁷⁰⁾. The level of taxes under the Hellenists had become repressive⁽⁷¹⁾, making relief from Seleucid taxation a significant consequence of the revolt. That seems a likely explanation for the translator's preoccupation with economic plunder as the supreme crime of the

⁽⁶⁹⁾ See J.W. OLLEY, 'Righteousness' in the Septuagint of Isaiah (Missoula 1979) 122-23. For the importance of the Torah in LXX-Isa see SEELIGMANN, *Version*, 106-108.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Cf. A. VAN DER KOOIJ, "Isaiah in the Septuagint", *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (ed. C.C. BROYLES – C.A. EVANS) (Leiden 1997) II, 528-29.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Hengel reports that while Antiochus III had reduced the people's tax burden by one third (viz. of what they had paid to the Ptolemies), Seleucus IV apparently "revoked these concessions again and demanded 300 talents", while Jason seems to have increased the contribution to 360 talents and then, under Menelaus, the people's tax load "was screwed up to almost a double contribution of 660 talents – a third of the annual payment to Rome, with which Antiochus was in arrears" (*Judaism and Hellenism*, II, 28).

people's rulers, with removal of such oppression constituting a signal feature of divine deliverance.

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SUMMARY

The translator of LXX-Isaiah is known to have perceived in the prophet's words presages of events in his day and to have expressed those in his translation. Some such themes recur often enough to merit designating them leitmotifs. Such is the case with the description of the people's plunder through taxation as portrayed in 3,12-15; 5,5.17; 6,13; 9,3-4. Each of these descriptions arises through a unique construal of Hebrew syntax or an assumption of novel semantic ranges for Hebrew lexemes. The appearance of this theme in each of these otherwise unrelated passages merits designating it a leitmotif.

ANIMADVERSIONES

La définition de l'«autre évangile» en Ga 1,6-7

Dans sa Lettre aux Galates, après avoir parlé d'un «autre évangile», auquel les Galates étaient en train de passer, l'apôtre Paul donne des précisions qui sont interprétées de façons très différentes par les traducteurs et les commentateurs. Comme souvent, en effet, la phrase de l'apôtre est complexe et semble même, à première vue, contenir une contradiction. Voici le texte de ce passage, sans ponctuation, car sa ponctuation constitue un des problèmes à résoudre:

Θαυμάζω ὅτι [...] μετατίθεσθε [...] εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον
ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο εἰ μή τινές εἰσιν οἱ ταρασσόντες ὑμᾶς
καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Comment faut-il ponctuer ce passage et quel est son sens exact?

*
* *

Le problème de la ponctuation se pose entre la relative ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο et la conditionnelle introduite par εἰ μή, qui la suit immédiatement. Certains éditeurs séparent ces deux propositions par un point en haut⁽¹⁾. On a alors deux phrases distinctes, la première se terminant par ἄλλο et la seconde commençant par εἰ μή. Cette seconde phrase est elliptique, car elle ne comporte pas de proposition principale. On peut la comparer à la phrase elliptique de 1 Co 7,17, qui commence, elle aussi, par εἰ μή. Ce εἰ μή équivaut en ce cas à une conjonction de coordination adversative, comme ἀλλὰ ou πλὴν.

Entre les deux propositions, d'autres éditeurs mettent simplement une virgule, qui n'interrompt pas le cours de la phrase⁽²⁾. Nous parlerons plus loin de cette autre possibilité.

La forte ponctuation suscite de grosses difficultés d'interprétation, car elle donne l'impression que l'apôtre se contredit: il parle d'un «autre évangile, qui n'est pas autre». Il est vrai que, pour dire «autre», il n'emploie pas deux fois le même terme; il affirme ἕτερον, il nie ἄλλο. Cette différence est-elle significative? Il est bien difficile de le démontrer. En grec classique,

⁽¹⁾ C'est le cas de Westcott-Hort, H.J. Vogels, E. Nestle, J.M. Bover. Cette forte ponctuation est adoptée dans la 3^e édition de *The Greek New Testament*, préparée par K. Aland, M. Black, C.M. Martini, B.M. Metzger et A. Wikgren, et publiée en 1975 par les United Bible Societies.

⁽²⁾ C'est le cas de C. Tischendorf, H. von Soden, B. Weiss, A. Souter, A. Merk. Cette faible ponctuation est adoptée dans le *Novum Testamentum graece* de Nestle-Aland, 26^e et 27^e édition.

ἕτερος signifie «autre en parlant de deux», mais cette nuance ne s'est pas toujours maintenue dans la *koinè*. ἄλλος et ἕτερος y sont pratiquement interchangeables pour exprimer l'altérité. Celle-ci, évidemment, peut être qualitative ou simplement quantitative. Autrement dit, le mot «autre» peut désigner un autre différent ou un autre semblable. Le mot français n'exprime pas par lui-même cette distinction; c'est le contexte qui la révèle. En grec, certains auteurs estiment que la nuance est exprimée par la différence entre ἄλλος et ἕτερος; mais ils ne sont pas d'accord sur la distribution des deux significations: selon les uns, ἕτερος signifierait «un autre d'un genre différent» et ἄλλος «un autre du même genre»; selon les autres, le rapport serait inverse; ἕτερος: «un autre du même genre»; ἄλλος: «un autre d'un genre différent»⁽³⁾.

En réalité, les deux termes, ἄλλος et ἕτερος, peuvent l'un comme l'autre désigner soit «un autre du même genre» soit «un autre d'un genre différent». Lorsqu'on veut dire explicitement «un autre du même genre», on ajoute τοιοῦτος et cela, aussi bien avec ἄλλος qu'avec ἕτερος. En l'absence de τοιοῦτος, les deux termes n'expriment par eux-mêmes que l'altérité, sans préciser.

Il n'est donc pas possible de voir en Ga 1,6 un contraste entre ἕτερον et ἄλλο et de traduire: «passer à un autre évangile, d'un genre différent, qui n'est pas un autre du même genre». Un commentaire récent, qui s'appuie sur l'opinion de Burton, adopte pourtant cette interprétation tautologique et propose une traduction qui élimine, dans le second cas, la notion d'altérité et n'y conserve que la connotation de similitude, supposée présente. On obtient alors: «turning to a different gospel – which is not at all the same gospel»⁽⁴⁾. Cette traduction élimine complètement la contradiction que présente le texte de Paul, lorsqu'on met une forte ponctuation avant εἰ μὴ, mais cette élimination est obtenue au moyen d'un procédé inacceptable, qui consiste à occulter le sens propre d'un terme et à le remplacer par une possible connotation non exprimée. On aboutit ainsi à transformer une négation d'altérité en négation d'identité et à attribuer à ἄλλο le sens de τὸ αὐτό.

La forte ponctuation pousse d'autres traducteurs à prendre beaucoup de libertés avec le texte. On peut observer différents stades d'infidélité:

Au lieu de traduire: «un autre évangile, qui n'est pas autre», on traduit: «un autre évangile, qui n'en est pas un autre»⁽⁵⁾. L'infidélité est à peine sensible. Elle semble se maintenir dans des limites acceptables. En fait, cependant, elle équivaut à substituer, dans le texte, «évangile» à «autre». Au lieu de: «un autre évangile, qui n'est pas autre», on dit: «un autre évangile, qui n'est pas un évangile».

Cette substitution apparaît nettement dans la traduction anglaise du dictionnaire de Bauer. Dans l'édition allemande, la traduction de Ga 1,6-7 est:

⁽³⁾ La première position est celle de J.B. LIGHTFOOT, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London-Cambridge ¹⁰1890) *in loco*; E.D.W. BURTON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1980). La position contraire a été défendue, contre Lightfoot, par W.M. RAMSAY, *A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London 1899) 261.

⁽⁴⁾ R.N. LONGENECKER, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas 1990) 12 et 15.

⁽⁵⁾ Cf. F. MUSSNER: «zu einem anderen Evangelium, das kein anderes ist», *Der Galaterbrief* (HTC IX; Freiburg ³1977) 53.

«zu e. anderen Evangelium, welches gar kein anderes ist»⁽⁶⁾. Dans la «translation and adaptation» anglaise, on lit: «to another gospel, which is no (other) gospel at all»⁽⁷⁾. Le mot εὐαγγέλιον est ajouté; le mot ἄλλο est mis entre parenthèses; il est jugé pléonastique; la négation est renforcée par un «at all» qui n'a aucun appui dans le texte grec.

Le stade suivant consiste à passer plus nettement de la négation de l'altérité (ὁ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο) à la négation de l'existence (ὁ οὐκ ἔστιν), en faisant comme si le verbe ἔστιν était employé sans prédicat. Dans *La Sacra Bibbia*, on trouve: «per passare a un altro vangelo, il quale altro non c'è»⁽⁸⁾. Le traducteur a l'habileté de conserver apparemment dans la relative la traduction du mot ἄλλο, mais, en lui donnant une autre fonction syntaxique, il l'élimine en fait; «altro» n'est plus prédicat du relatif, il est uni au relatif pour être sujet du verbe ἔστιν employé absolument: «un autre évangile, lequel autre n'existe pas» (littér. «il n'y a pas»).

Dans la traduction de H. Schlier, le mot ἄλλο disparaît purement et simplement: «zu einem anderen Evangelium – das es gar nicht gibt»⁽⁹⁾. La négation d'existence est renforcée par un «gar», ajouté gratuitement.

Autre progrès encore dans l'infidélité au texte: on supprime le pronom relatif et on généralise la négation d'existence. C'est ce que fait la TOB: «pour passer à un autre évangile. Non pas qu'il y en ait un autre»⁽¹⁰⁾. Ainsi ce n'est pas seulement l'autre évangile proposé aux Galates dont on nie l'existence, mais n'importe quel autre évangile. La négation est encore plus nette dans une traduction allemande⁽¹¹⁾: «dass ihr [...] euch einem anderen Evangelium zuwendet. Doch es gibt kein anderes Evangelium». A. Pitta traduit de même: «Non c'è un altro»⁽¹²⁾.

Ces traductions introduisent dans le texte de Paul des idées exprimées par divers commentateurs, idées qui vont bien au delà du texte. Mussner, par exemple, commente le texte en disant: «Es gibt kein anderes Evangelium». «Ein anders Evangelium existiert nicht (οὐκ ἔστιν)». Il s'appuie sur la grammaire de Blass-Debrunner (306,4) pour affirmer que ἄλλο est «superflu et semble être seulement pléonastique»⁽¹³⁾. Bonnard s'exprime en termes semblables: «Paul affirme d'abord qu'un tel évangile n'existe pas (οὐκ ἔστιν); le neutre ἄλλο – autre est pléonastique»⁽¹⁴⁾.

Certains traducteurs s'accordent encore plus de liberté avec le texte et y introduisent la négation d'une dualité. R.A. Cole traduit: «... to a different Gospel. Not that there really are two sorts of Gospel»⁽¹⁵⁾. De même, la Bible de Jérusalem: «pour passer à un second évangile, – non qu'il y en ait

⁽⁶⁾ W. BAUER, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* (Berlin 1958) 623, s.v. ἕτερος, 1by.

⁽⁷⁾ W.F. ARNDT – F.W. GINGRICH, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Cambridge-Chicago 1957) 315, s.v. ἕτερος, 1by.

⁽⁸⁾ *La Sacra Bibbia*, trad. Mariani, Milano 1964, *in loco*.

⁽⁹⁾ H. SCHLIER, *Der Brief an die Galater* (KEK VII; Göttingen 1971) 36.

⁽¹⁰⁾ *Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible* (Paris 1972) *in loco*.

⁽¹¹⁾ *Einheitsübersetzung der Heiligen Schrift. Das Neue Testament* (Stuttgart, 1996) *in loco*.

⁽¹²⁾ A. PITTA, *Lettera ai Galati* (Scritti delle origini cristiane 9; Bologna 1996) 73.

⁽¹³⁾ MUSSNER, *Galaterbrief*, 53 et 55.

⁽¹⁴⁾ P. BONNARD, *L'épître de saint Paul aux Galates* (CNT IX; Neuchâtel 1972) 23.

⁽¹⁵⁾ R.A. COLE, *Galatians* (TNTC; London 1965) *in loco*.

deux»⁽¹⁶⁾. Consciemment ou non, ces traducteurs introduisent dans le texte de Paul une idée exprimée dans le commentaire de Lightfoot: «It is not another gospel, the Apostle says, for there cannot be two gospels, and as it is not the same, it is no gospel at all»⁽¹⁷⁾. Nous discuterons plus loin l'assertion selon laquelle l'apôtre excluait la possibilité de deux formes légitimes de l'évangile. Une chose, pour le moment, est certaine, c'est que cette exclusion n'est pas exprimée dans la phrase de Ga 1,6-7; celle-ci, en effet, ne contient pas l'expression «deux évangiles».

Ces divers exemples montrent bien qu'en coupant la phrase après ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο, on se met dans une impasse. On ne peut échapper au danger d'incohérence («un autre évangile qui n'est pas autre») qu'en tombant dans celui d'infidélité au texte.

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En réalité, la ponctuation forte après ἄλλο est gravement critiquable, car elle coupe en deux tronçons une expression grecque qui ne fait qu'un, οὐκ ἄλλο εἰ μὴ, et elle rend ainsi le texte incompréhensible. On a, d'un côté, la proposition relative ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο, qui doit fournir à elle seule un sens acceptable, et de l'autre côté, une phrase indépendante qui est incomplète, car elle n'est constituée que d'une proposition subordonnée.

La grammaire de Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf cite Ga 1,6-7 avec la bonne ponctuation et reconnaît que οὐκ ἄλλο introduit εἰ μὴ (n° 306,4, n.8), mais elle prend une position étrange, car elle considère ἄλλο comme «pleonastisch» et traduit la proposition relative comme si le verbe ἔστιν y était employé absolument: «welches es gar nicht gibt». Au lieu de la négation d'une qualité (οὐκ ἄλλο), on a alors la négation de l'existence (οὐκ ἔστιν). Cette interprétation est infidèle au texte. Dans la locution οὐκ ἄλλο εἰ μὴ le mot ἄλλο n'est aucunement pléonastique; il désigne une qualité, qui est niée.

Le «pleonastisch» de Blass-Debrunner et la traduction fautive de la relative ont induit en erreur plus d'un commentateur. Mussner et Pitta, cités ci-dessus, s'y réfèrent explicitement; Bonnard s'y conforme sans s'y référer; la *Einheitsübersetzung* s'en inspire visiblement. Un commentateur italien, qui s'y réfère, a le mérite de proposer des explications détaillées, dont voici la traduction en français: “O οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο [...] Il y a là une redondance excessive et nous devons considérer comme superflu ou le pronom initial [ὃ] ou celui qui est final [ἄλλο, mais ce mot est ici un adjectif et non un pronom]. Dans le premier cas, nous pourrions traduire: «un autre (sous-entendu: évangile), il n'y en a pas»; dans le second cas: «lequel n'existe pas.» «Le ἄλλο peut être reconnu sans hésitation comme pléonastique: sa présence, en effet, s'explique en tant qu'il introduit le εἰ μὴ qui suit. Si on le considère comme proleptique par rapport à εἰ μὴ (comme un «nihil aliud nisi...»; cf. Bl.-Debr. 306,8), et donc pléonastique, nous pouvons comprendre: vous êtes en train de vous tourner vers un autre évangile «lequel, en réalité, n'existe

⁽¹⁶⁾ *La Sainte Bible* traduite en français sous la direction de l'École biblique de Jérusalem (Paris 1974) *in loco*.

⁽¹⁷⁾ LIGHTFOOT, *Galatians*, *in loco*.

pas, etc.»⁽¹⁸⁾. Ce commentaire, on le voit, donne toujours à οὐκ ἔστιν le sens d'une négation d'existence, comme si le verbe était employé absolument.

La traduction correcte de la phrase est la suivante:

«Je m'étonne que [...] vous passiez [...] à un autre évangile, qui n'est autre que [ceci:] il y a des gens qui vous troublent et qui veulent subvertir l'évangile du Christ.»

Dans son commentaire, W.M. Ramsay présentait une traduction de ce genre comme une possibilité, «peut-être la meilleure», et il ajoutait que c'est du très bon grec⁽¹⁹⁾. Il montrait cependant une préférence pour la ponctuation forte et pour une traduction très différente qui ajoute beaucoup au texte de Paul⁽²⁰⁾.

Ramsay, nous l'avons dit, estime que le grec de l'apôtre est de très bonne qualité en cette phrase, lorsqu'on la comprend en unissant οὐκ ἄλλο à εἰ μή. Cette opinion est discutable.

L'expression οὐκ ἄλλο εἰ μή, assurément, est du très bon grec. Mais la façon dont Paul continue sa phrase n'est pas parfaitement cohérente, car l'apôtre change inopinément le sujet du verbe. Après les mots «un évangile différent, qui n'est pas autre que», on attendrait une expression qui se rapporte au même sujet grammatical. Ramsay l'a bien senti, car il donne une paraphrase qui répond à cette attente: «another Gospel which is merely a perversion of the Gospel». Mais la phrase de Paul part dans une autre direction, à cause de sa préoccupation de défendre les Galates contre les adversaires de sa prédication; il écrit littéralement: «un évangile différent qui n'est pas autre qu'il y a des gens qui vous troublent et qui veulent subvertir l'évangile du Christ». Le sujet grammatical n'est plus l'évangile, mais des personnes, les adversaires.

La première expression («il y a des gens qui vous troublent») n'a aucun rapport conceptuel avec le thème de l'évangile; la seconde expression revient à ce thème, mais le sujet est toujours les personnes. Cette façon de s'exprimer correspond bien au style impulsif de Paul; sous l'emprise de ses sentiments passionnés, l'apôtre bouscule souvent la grammaire. C'est évidemment l'irrégularité de sa phrase qui a provoqué l'erreur de ponctuation et les fausses interprétations⁽²¹⁾. Pour rendre la phrase de Paul lisible en français, il suffit d'ajouter le pronom «ceci:» après les mots: «qui n'est autre que». C'est ce que j'ai fait dans la traduction donnée ci-dessus⁽²²⁾.

⁽¹⁸⁾ B. CORSANI, *Lettera ai Galati* (CSANT 9; Genova 1990) 68-69.

⁽¹⁹⁾ «There are two alternatives; the simplest, and perhaps the best, is that which the American revisers give in the margin, deleting the punctuation after ἄλλο: «a different gospel which is nothing else save that there are some that...would pervert the Gospel of Christ,» in other words «another Gospel which is merely a perversion of the Gospel». This is quite good Greek.» RAMSAY, *Galatians*, 264.

⁽²⁰⁾ «...to another gospel (as announced by the older apostles), not that it is really different from mine (for the older apostles agree with me)», RAMSAY, *Galatians*, 265.

⁽²¹⁾ L'erreur de ponctuation remonte loin. On la trouve déjà dans le Vaticanus, qui met un point en haut après ἄλλο. Mais ce manuscrit est plutôt fantaisiste pour la ponctuation: il met aussi un point en haut au milieu de la première phrase, avant καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ πάντες ὁδολογοί.

⁽²²⁾ Sans être aussi précise, la traduction allemande donnée dans H.D. BETZ, *Der Galaterbrief* (Munich 1988) 98, correspond à cette interprétation: «... zu einem andern Evangelium, was [doch] auf nichts anderes hinauskommt, als dass es gewisse Leute

En fin de compte, la phrase de Paul nie simplement que l'autre évangile soit authentique. C'est une subversion de l'évangile. Paul ne nie pas l'existence de cet autre évangile. Il ne nie pas non plus la possibilité de plusieurs formes authentiques de l'évangile. Sa phrase ne se prononce pas sur ce point. On ne peut pas la traduire: «Il n'y a pas d'autre évangile» et encore moins: «Non qu'il y en ait deux».

Il faut cependant reconnaître qu'en déclarant que l'autre évangile n'est rien d'autre qu'une subversion de «l'évangile du Christ», Paul laisse entendre qu'il n'y a qu'un évangile du Christ. Mais il ne s'ensuit pas que cet évangile ne puisse être présenté de manière différente par des apôtres différents. Lorsque, quelques versets plus loin, Paul parle de l'évangile annoncé par lui (Ga 1,11), il est bien conscient que cet évangile ne s'identifie pas purement et simplement à l'évangile du Christ, mais comporte des caractéristiques particulières qui le distinguent de l'évangile du Christ tel que le prêchaient les apôtres. La chose est encore plus claire en Ga 2,2, lorsque Paul dit qu'il est monté à Jérusalem pour rencontrer les autorités de l'Église-mère; il précise alors: «Je leur exposai l'évangile que j'annonce parmi les nations païennes» (Ga 2,2). Si cet évangile était identique au leur, il n'aurait pas eu à le leur exposer.

Certes, l'essentiel de cet évangile est le même. Paul le dit clairement dans la Première aux Corinthiens. Il s'agit de l'annonce de la mort et de la résurrection du Christ (1 Co 15,3-4). A ce sujet, Paul déclare: «Que ce soit moi que ce soit eux, c'est cela que nous annonçons» (15,11). Mais l'évangile comporte bien d'autres éléments et leur présentation peut varier considérablement pour s'adapter aux diverses situations religieuses des personnes évangélisées, la différence principale étant l'appartenance ou la non-appartenance au peuple d'Israël. Paul parle à ce sujet de deux évangiles: «l'évangile du prépuce» et celui «de la circoncision». «A moi, écrit-il, a été confié l'évangile du prépuce, comme à Pierre [celui] de la circoncision» (Ga 2,7). Il est vrai que, dans cette phrase, εὐαγγέλιον signifie «évangélisation» plutôt qu'«évangile». Paul a reçu la tâche d'évangéliser les païens et Pierre celle d'évangéliser les Israélites. Mais cette répartition comportait nécessairement une adaptation du message à deux publics profondément différents. Il fallait en particulier décider si dans l'évangile prêché aux païens, il était nécessaire d'inclure l'obligation de s'assimiler aux Israélites en acceptant la circoncision. Éclairé «par une révélation de Jésus Christ» (Ga 1,12), Paul a compris que cette exigence ne s'imposait pas. Son évangile a donc été un évangile de la non-circoncision en un double sens: il s'adressait aux incircircis et il ne leur imposait pas la circoncision. Il s'opposait, au contraire, à ce qu'ils se fassent circoncire (cf. Ga 5,2-14).

En conclusion, il faut dire, d'abord, que Ga 1,6-7 ne se comprend correctement que si on y reconnaît l'expression οὐκ ἄλλο εἰ μὴ, dans laquelle ἄλλο n'est aucunement pléonastique. Ajoutons ensuite qu'en conséquence, le

gibt...». Cette traduction diffère de l'original anglais, H.D. BETZ, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1979) où l'on trouve: «... to a different gospel – not that there is another [gospel]» (44) et, plus loin: «there is no other gospel (οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο)» (49), traductions qui suppriment le pronom relatif ὃ et ajoutent le mot εὐαγγέλιον.

texte de Paul n'exprime pas l'idée que l'autre évangile n'existe pas et encore moins qu'il n'y a pas deux sortes d'évangile. Loin de déclarer en Ga 1,6-7 qu'il ne peut y avoir deux formes légitimes de l'unique évangile, Paul qualifie de subversion de l'évangile du Christ la position des judaïsants qui voulaient précisément imposer à tous, aux païens comme aux Juifs, la même forme d'évangile. Dans la Lettre aux Galates, Paul défend dès le début sa façon particulière d'annoncer l'évangile aux païens; il s'oppose fermement à ce que les chrétiens venus des nations païennes soient contraints de s'assimiler aux Israélites. La mort et la résurrection du Christ les a libérés de cette exigence.

Albert VANHOYE S.J.

SUMMARY

A punctuation which divides in two the expression οὐκ ἄλλο εἰ μὴ brings some exegetes to say that Paul, in Gal 1,6-7, denies the existence of any other gospel. But if one respects the unity of the greek expression, one sees that Paul denies only the authenticity of another gospel. He does not deny the existence of two legitimate forms of evangelization (cf. Gal 2,7).

Die Verbformen mit dem Suffix “ו-” als Kernelemente der Textstruktur von Ex 15,1b-18

Im Laufe der neueren Forschungsgeschichte sind zahlreiche Gliederungsmerkmale in Ex 15,1b-18, dem sogenannten “Schilfmeerlied”, identifiziert worden. Trotz andauernder Bemühungen ist es bisher allerdings nicht gelungen, die verschiedenen Kriterien so zusammenzufügen, dass sie einen überzeugenden Bauplan ergäben.

Ich möchte im folgenden einen neuen Gliederungsvorschlag skizzieren, der sich auf ein bisher wenig beachtetes Struktursignal stützt, nämlich auf das in Ex 15,1b-18 auffallend häufig vorkommende Suffix 3. Pers. Mask. Plur. ו-. Genauer geht es um die neun Belege dieses Suffix an Verbalformen⁽¹⁾. Es zeigt sich, dass die durch diese neun suffigierten Verbformen angezeigte Struktur nahezu den gesamten Text durchzieht und andere wichtige Strukturkriterien zu integrieren vermag.

Die dichte Frequenz⁽²⁾ des Suffix ו- in Ex 15,1b-18 ist schon gelegentlich angemerkt worden⁽³⁾. Von einigen Autoren wurde sie als ein Hinweis auf das hohe Alter des Textes interpretiert, der die archaische Sprache in so beeindruckender Dichte bewahrt habe⁽⁴⁾. Allerdings ist auch früh und immer wieder die Meinung vertreten worden, es handele sich nicht um ein archaisches, sondern um ein archaisierendes beziehungsweise stilistisches Element. Zu dieser Ansicht neigen naturgemäß eher diejenigen Wissenschaftler, die Ex 15,1b-18 für einen relativ jungen Text halten⁽⁵⁾.

Die Verteilung der Belege innerhalb des Textes wurde bisher offenbar kaum beachtet. Die einzige diesbezügliche Analyse stammt meines Wissens von D.N. Freedman⁽⁶⁾. Da sie mir den entscheidenden Ansatzpunkt geboten hat, möchte ich die von Freedman eruierten Beziehungen zwischen den suffigierten Verbformen kurz darstellen: תבלעמו (V.12) wäre demnach Zentrum einer Inklusion. Es würde eingeschlossen von den Belegen יאכלמו (V.7) und יאדחבו (V.15). Einen zweiten “Ring” bildeten die offenbar paarweise zusammengehörigen suffigierten Verbformen תמלאמו und תורישמו (beide V.9)

⁽¹⁾ 5a.7b.9bc.10a.12a.15b.17a

⁽²⁾ Laut M.L. BRENNER, *The Song of the Sea*. Ex 15,1-21 (BZAW 195; Berlin – New York 1991) 33, begegnet ו- im Alten Testament 23mal als Suffix an Verbformen; nirgends außer in Ex 15 kommen mehr als zwei Belege innerhalb weniger Verse zusammen.

⁽³⁾ Neben Brenner etwa auch von C. HOUTMAN, *Exodus* (HCOT; Kampen 1996) II, 244.

⁽⁴⁾ F.M. CROSS, JR. – D.N. FREEDMAN, “The Song of Mirjam”, *JNES* 14 (1955) 237-250, hier: 245; F.M. CROSS, JR., *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*. Essays on the History of the Religion of Israel (Cambridge/Mass. 1973) 128, Anm. 56.

⁽⁵⁾ BRENNER, *Song* 33-35; HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 244; T. DOZEMAN, “The Song of the Sea and Salvation History”, *On the Way to Nineveh*. Studies in Honor of George M. Landes (Hrsg. S.L. COOK – S.C. WINTER) (ASOR Books 4; Atlanta 1999) 94-113, hier: 99.

⁽⁶⁾ D.N. FREEDMAN, “Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15”, *A Light on my Path*. Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers (Hrsg. H.N. Bream – R.D. Heim) (GTS 4; Philadelphia 1974) 163-203, hier: 183.

und וְהִטְעֵמוּ und וְהִבְאֵמוּ (beide V.17). Diese letzteren vier Worte sind zugleich chiasmisch angeordnet: Die erste Verbform in V.9 und die zweite Verbform in V.17 stehen im Qal, die zweite Verbform in V.9 und die erste Verbform in V.17 hingegen im Hifil. Die Verben in den Versen 7, 12 und 15 haben die Ägypter zum Objekt, während sich die vier Suffixe in den Versen 9 und 17 auf die Israeliten beziehen.

Diese Analyse ist nur teilweise korrekt. Freedman kommt aufgrund zweier kleiner, aber folgeschwerer Entscheidungen um die Früchte seiner Idee, die er dementsprechend auch nicht weiterverfolgt. Erstens berücksichtigt er ausdrücklich nur die Belege des Suffix an Verbformen im Imperfekt. Die Perfektform כָּסְמוּ (V.10) wird also nicht einbezogen — sie gehört aber dazu. Und zweitens bezieht er — dies ohne Erläuterung — auch die Verbform יִכְסִימוּ (V.5) nicht mit ein; vermutlich betrachtet er sie wegen ihrer abweichenden Endung ($-\text{י}$ statt $-\text{ו}$ wie die übrigen Verbformen) als nicht zugehörig. Sachlich handelt es sich aber zweifellos um dasselbe Suffix 3. Pers. Mask. Plur⁽⁷⁾.

1. Der Bauplan des Textes unter Einbezug aller suffigierten Verbformen

Berücksichtigt man alle neun Verbformen mit dem Suffix “ $-\text{מו}$ ”, so stellt sich die Struktur folgendermaßen dar⁽⁸⁾. Ein Teil der Verbformen bildet eine konzentrische Figur mit כָּסְמוּ , der einzigen Perfektform mit dem auffälligen Suffix, als Zentrum.

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 5 | יִכְסִימוּ | | |
| 7 | | יֹאכְלֵמוּ | |
| 10 | | | כָּסְמוּ |
| 12 | | תִּבְלַעְמוּ | |
| 15 | יֹאחֲזֵמוּ | | |

V.5a und V.15b entsprechen einander inhaltlich, d. h. sie machen vergleichbare Aussagen, deren Analogie durch die Gegenüberstellung der beiden Verbformen vollends zutage tritt: Wie die Fluten die Ägypter bedecken (יִכְסִימוּ), so ergreift (יֹאחֲזֵמוּ) die Moabiter das Entsetzen. Angesichts dieser Beziehung zwischen den beiden Wörtern ist es wohl kein Zufall, dass sie sich auch lautlich sehr nahekomen.

Die Kola 7b, 10a und 12, in denen sich die Formen יֹאכְלֵמוּ , כָּסְמוּ und תִּבְלַעְמוּ befinden, ähneln einander schon in ihrer Struktur auf frappierende Weise:

| | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----|
| כָּקֵשׁ | יֹאכְלֵמוּ | חֲרֹנֶךְ | תִּשְׁלַח | 7b |
| יֵם | כָּסְמוּ | בְּרוּחֶךְ | נִשְׁפֹּת | 10a |
| אֶרֶץ | תִּבְלַעְמוּ | יְמִינֶךָ | נִשְׁתִּית | 12 |

Aber auch inhaltlich stehen die Aussagen eindeutig in Korrelation: Jedesmal wendet sich der Poet an JHWH, der “seinen Zorn schickt” (7), “mit

⁽⁷⁾ Vgl. Ges.-K § 58g; P. JOÜON, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Translated and revised by T. Muraoka (SubBi 14; Roma 1991) § 61i.

⁽⁸⁾ Vgl. den Abdruck des gesamten Textes im Anhang.

seinem Hauch bläst” (10) und “seine Rechte ausstreckt” (12). Subjekt der suffigierten Verbform ist in V.7 der verzehrende Zorn JHWHs, in den Versen 10 und 12 das zudeckende Meer beziehungsweise die verschlingende Erde. Dreh- und Angelpunkt des Gesamttextes gemäß der Struktur der suffigierten Verbformen ist also offensichtlich nicht V.12 (wie in Freedmans Schema), sondern V.10. Dies ist um so interessanter, als — worin mittlerweile viele Ausleger übereinzukommen scheinen — in Ex 15,1b-18 der Zug durchs Schilfmeer und der Zug durch den Jordan ineinandergeblendet werden, quasi als zwei gleichwertige “historische” Realisierungen eines einzigen heilsgeschichtlichen Ereignisses dargeboten werden⁽⁹⁾; dennoch liegt der Textmittelpunkt eindeutig am Meer, wo das Lied ja auch gesungen wird⁽¹⁰⁾.

Des weiteren erkennt man nun, dass V.12, der bei einer herkömmlichen Gliederung aufgrund seines scheinbar unpassenden Inhalts so schwer zu integrieren ist⁽¹¹⁾, ein adäquates Gegenstück in V.7b hat. In der Literatur ist bereits öfter angemerkt worden, dass der Ausdruck בלע ארץ im AT nur in Verbindung mit der Erzählung vom Aufstand Korachs, Datans und Abirams in Num 16 auftaucht⁽¹²⁾. Die Erde (ארץ) spaltete sich und verschlang (בלע) Korach und die Seinen. Ferner heißt es in Num 16,35, dass Feuer von JHWH ausgegangen sei und einen Teil der Aufständischen verzehrt (אכל) habe — in Ex 15,7 wird dasselbe Verb gebraucht; dessen Subjekt ist allerdings nicht, wie in Num 16,35, אש, sondern חרון. Folgende Assoziation liegt nahe: Sowohl am Schilfmeer als auch bei der Bestrafung der aufständischen Israeliten in Num 16 bewirkt JHWH die Vernichtung seiner Gegner selbst, ohne dass er dafür menschliche “Hilfe” in Anspruch nehmen muss⁽¹³⁾! Ob man diese Gemeinsamkeit als ausreichenden Grund dafür akzeptiert, dass zwei Bezüge auf die Bestrafung israelischer Aufständischer eine Inklusion um das Zentrum des Schilfmeerliedes bilden, muss hier offen bleiben. Klar ist aufgrund der Struktur vorerst nur, dass der Autor sie mit Bedacht und Absicht an diesen beiden Stellen positioniert hat.

Es existieren aber noch vier weitere Verben mit dem besagten Suffix, nämlich je zwei in den Versen 9 und 17. Sie sind zwar in der Tat untereinander chiasmisch und insofern wiederum konzentrisch angeordnet.

⁽⁹⁾ Vgl. N. LOHFINK, “Das Siegeslied am Schilfmeer”, *Das Siegeslied am Schilfmeer. Christliche Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Alten Testament* (Frankfurt a. M. 1966) 102-128, bes. 122-126; G. FISCHER, “Das Schilfmeerlied Exodus 15 in seinem Kontext”, *Bib* 77 (1996) 32-47, hier: 36.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Daher schreibt auch FREEDMAN, “Strophe and Meter”, 193, völlig zu Recht: “According to the poet, only one battle counted, and one victory, at the sea; that was enough to permanently disable Egypt and at the same time terrify the other nations into complete passivity. The victory was total — and totally Yahweh’s”.

⁽¹¹⁾ Dazu mehr im Abschnitt “Andere Strukturmerkmale auf dem Hintergrund der Verbalsuffixstruktur”.

⁽¹²⁾ Z.B. FISCHER, “Schilfmeerlied”, 35, Anm. 13.

⁽¹³⁾ JHWH bedient sich laut Ex 14,16.21.29 Moses, der seinen Stab bzw. seine Hand über das Meer ausstreckt und es damit spaltet und wieder zusammenschlagen läßt. Dies ist kaum als tatkräftige Mitwirkung, sondern eher als Symbolisierung des handelnden JHWH zu werten. — Eine weitere eigenständige Vernichtungsaktion JHWHs ist die Tötung der Erstgeburt Ägyptens in Ex 12,29; allerdings sind die Erstgeburt wohl nicht direkt als JHWHs Feinde zu betrachten.

Wichtiger im Hinblick auf die Gesamtstruktur ist aber ihre parallelisierende Funktion.

Die beiden ersten Suffixe begegnen unmittelbar vor V.10, dem Textzentrum. Beide Verbformen haben den Feind (genauer seine Seele und seine Hand) zum Subjekt; Objekt sind in beiden Fällen die Israeliten. Es handelt sich hier um die einzige wirklich spannende Passage des ganzen Textes: Zwar war vorher schon zweimal (1b.4f.) vom Untergang der Ägypter die Rede, so dass V.10a keine echte Überraschung mehr bietet. Aber in V.9 wird die bedrohliche Situation den Hörern plötzlich direkt vor Augen gestellt, der Feind ist noch lebendig und nähert sich voller Blutdurst. Hier wird nicht — wie in anderen Passagen des Liedes — das Gesamtgeschehen in der Rückschau beschrieben und theologisch reflektiert; vielmehr scheinen die Verse 9 und 10 den alles entscheidenden Wendepunkt dieses Gesamtgeschehens in einer Weise zu vergegenwärtigen, die als kultisch-sakramental zu bezeichnen wohl nicht ganz fernliegt. V.10 bildet daher — neben seiner Stellung als Höhepunkt der bereits beschriebenen konzentrischen Struktur — mit V.9 zusammen auch die Klimax der ersten Gedichthälfte.

V.17 mit den Verbformen *הבסמו* und *והתעמו* ist der Höhepunkt des zweiten Teils und mit V.18 der Schluß- und Zielpunkt des ganzen Liedes. Die dort geschilderte Situation kontrastiert V.9 aufs schärfste: Nicht mehr vom Feind gejagt und mit dem Tod bedroht, sondern unter JHWHs Führung auf JHWHs “Erbberg” angekommen und “eingepflanzt”, also mit einer neuen, dauerhaften Lebensgrundlage beschenkt, ist “das Volk, das JHWH sich geschaffen hat”. Subjekt beider Verben ist diesmal JHWH, Objekt sind, wie in V.9, die Israeliten⁽¹⁴⁾.

Um zusammenzufassen: Die Analyse der Belege des Suffixes *מו*- an den Verbformen des Schilfmeerliedes bringt den gleichermaßen konzentrischen wie parallelen Aufbau von Ex 15,1b-18 zum Vorschein. Sie zeigt, dass sich aus den neun vom Autor des Schilfmeerliedes mit dem charakteristischen Suffix versehenen Verbformen die Handlungsstruktur von Ex 15,4-17 erschließen lässt. Denn: Alle fünf konzentrisch angeordneten Verbformen haben die Feinde Israels zum Objekt, und alle diese fünf Verben lassen sich inhaltlich auf den gemeinsamen Nenner “besiegen” bringen: “(mit Wasser) bedecken” (5a.10a); “verzehren” (7b), “verschlingen” (12) und “ergreifen” (15b). Der Sieg über die Feinde spielt in Ex 15,1b-18 eine zentrale Rolle.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Interessant ist insbesondere der Kontrast zwischen *הורישמו* (V.9c) und *והתעמו* (V.17a). Das Verb *יָרַשׁ* hi. heißt nämlich nicht einfach “(ver)jagen”, sondern eher “enterben” und, davon abgeleitet, “jemanden von seinem Besitz verjagen”. An einigen Stellen impliziert es offenbar auch “töten”. In ihm klingen die Berichte von der Landnahme an, die meisten Belege finden sich in den Büchern Numeri bis Richter. Wenn dieser Begriff in V.9 den Ägyptern in den Mund gelegt wird, dann dürfte es sich um eine dichterische Identifikation der Ägypter mit den Feinden handeln, die Israel später daran hindern wollen, in ihrem Land sesshaft zu werden und die im zweiten Teil des Schilfmeerliedes erwähnt werden. Ihnen nehmen die Ägypter sozusagen die Worte aus dem Mund — und in der Tat geben die Völker in 14-16 keine mit V.9 vergleichbare Absichtserklärung ab, obgleich sie Israel selbstverständlich verjagen wollen. Die Ägypter aber vertreiben Israel ja gar nicht, erst recht nicht aus dessen eigenem Land. Das Sesshaftwerden Israels findet dann in V.17a statt, bildlich durch das Verb *נָטַע* ausgedrückt, nachdem die Feinde, welche es enterben wollten, in V.10 das Meer bedeckt hat. Vgl. dazu W.H.C. PROPP, *Exodus 1–18. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AncB 2; New York 1999) 525-526.

Die übrigen Verbformen haben die Israeliten zum Objekt: In V.9 sind sie Objekt der Feindseligkeit des Verfolgers; in V.17a sind sie Objekt von JHWHs Heilshandeln, der Israel für immer seine Gemeinschaft schenkt — dies ist nach der Vernichtung der Feinde in der Mitte des Liedes der zweite, diesmal “konstruktive” und endgültige Höhepunkt des Gedichts.

Die grundlegende Struktur der suffigierten Verbformen wird durch andere, in der Literatur größtenteils schon dargestellte formale und inhaltliche Strukturelemente interpretiert und ergänzt. Ihnen wende ich mich nun zu.

2. Andere Strukturmerkmale auf dem Hintergrund der Verbalsuffixstruktur

Ein prägnantes, schon oft besprochenes⁽¹⁵⁾ Merkmal des Schilfmeerliedes ist der sogenannte “steigernde Parallelismus” (“staircase-parallelism”), ein Parallelismus der Form *ab-cd // ab-ef*. Dieses Stilmittel wird mindestens dreimal — und zwar in auffallend regelmäßigen Abständen — verwendet, nämlich in den Versen 6, 11 und 16. In V.16 werden sogar zweieinhalb Elemente wiederholt, was gegenüber den beiden anderen Stellen nochmals eine Steigerung darstellt. Der Parallelismus in V.11 ist neben seiner zentralen Position im Text durch zwei Besonderheiten gekennzeichnet: Erstens steht er im Fragemodus, und zweitens bildet er vom Satzbau her keinen Abschluß wie die beiden anderen Stellen, sondern mündet in das eng zugehörige Kolon V.11c, das durch die Vervollständigung der — rhetorischen — Frage den Parallelismus erst voll ausschöpft. Wie ebenfalls bekannt ist, findet sich im jeweils unmittelbar vorausgehenden Vers aller drei Parallelismen ein ähnliches “Bild”: V.5b fahren die Ägypter “wie Stein” in die Tiefe, V.10b sinken sie gar “wie Blei”, und V.16b müssen die eingesessenen Völker starr “wie Stein” den Einzug der Israeliten ins Land mitansehen. Diese Stilelemente harmonisieren nun ausgezeichnet mit der durch die suffigierten Verben nahegelegten Struktur: Während die beiden “äußeren” Bild-Parallelismus-Passagen sich an die beiden Verbformen des “äußeren Rings” der konzentrischen Struktur, וִסְתִּימוּ (V.5a) und וִסְתִּימוּ (V.15b), anschließen — erstere unmittelbar, letztere mit zwei Kola Distanz —, steht der mittlere, mit Blei “beschwerte” Parallelismus direkt nach der zentralen Suffixverbform, וִסְתִּימוּ (V.10a). Die Verse 10 und 11 beinhalten also die Zentren von drei selbständigen, aber sorgfältigst miteinander in Beziehung gesetzten konzentrischen Figuren und verschmelzen so zum Zentrum des Gesamttextes.

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----|---------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 5 | suffigiertes Imperfekt | 10 | suffigiertes Perfekt | 15 | suffigiertes Imperfekt |
| 5 | “Stein” | 10 | “Blei” | 16 | “Stein” |
| 6 | Parallelismus | 11 | Parallelismus (erweitert) | 16 | Parallelismus |

Sosehr freilich die steigernden Parallelismen dem Schilfmeerlied Struktur und Rhythmus geben, sowenig kann man sie als wirkliche Strophenteiler in Anspruch nehmen. Sie bilden Höhepunkte, markieren aber

⁽¹⁵⁾ Z.B. J. MUILENBURG, “A Liturgy on the Triumphs of Yahweh”, *Studia biblica et semitica Theodoro Christiano Vriezen qui munere professoris theologiae per XXV annos functus est, ab amicis, collegis, discipulis dedicata* (Hrsg. W.C. UNNIK – A.S. VAN DER WOUDE) (Wageningen 1966) 233-251, hier: 237; FREEDMAN, “Strophe and Meter”, 164-165; M. HOWELL, “Exodus 15,1b-18: A Poetic Analysis”, *ETHL* 65 (1989) 5-42, hier: 23; FISCHER, “Schilfmeerlied”, 34-35; BRENNER, *Song*, 32.

keine Einschnitte in dem Sinn, dass sie Strophen abschließen oder eröffnen oder zwischen ihnen als Refrains eingeschoben wären⁽¹⁶⁾.

Sehr häufig hat man das Schilfmeerlied in erster Linie nach inhaltlichen Kriterien gliedern wollen oder jedenfalls de facto so gegliedert. In der Tat besteht weitgehende Einigkeit darüber, dass (von V.4) bis V.10 die Ereignisse am Schilfmeer thematisiert werden; von V.13 an hingegen handelt der Text offensichtlich vom Einzug der Israeliten in das verheißene Land. Vor allem durch Wortfeldanalysen ist diese schon oberflächlich wahrnehmbare Zweiteilung belegt worden, wobei beide Teile andererseits auch eine Schnittmenge bedeutungsvoller Wörter gemeinsam haben⁽¹⁷⁾. Schwierig wird es erst, wenn man die klar vorhandene "Doppelgesichtigkeit" des Textes in zwei eindeutig abgrenzbare Strophen ummünzen will. V.11 würde sich als Abschluß des ersten Abschnitts, als Zwischengesang und sogar als Eröffnung des zweiten Teils ausgezeichnet eignen, stünde nicht nach ihm noch V.12, der thematisch — wenn eine Zuordnung überhaupt akzeptabel erscheint — nur dem ersten und nicht etwa dem zweiten Teil zugeschlagen werden kann. Will man die Zäsur also notgedrungen erst nach V.12 setzen, obgleich dieser Vers als Zugabe zu dem großartigen erweiterten Parallelismus nur noch nachklappern würde, so stolpert man über die Tatsache, dass V.12 mit V.13 deutlich durch Alliteration verbunden ist (נְהַלְתָּ ... נְשִׁיתָ ... נְחִיתָ) und ein Auseinanderreißen dieser Verse daher auch nicht sachgerecht sein kann⁽¹⁸⁾. Im Rahmen der konzentrischen Struktur ist nun erkennbar, dass die Verse 7b und 12 offenbar eine gemeinsame externe Referenzstelle für die beiden Gedichthälften angeben und diese so miteinander verklammern. Die Tatsache, dass diese beiden Verse offensichtlich dieselbe Satzstruktur aufweisen wie das Zentrum, um das sie gespiegelt sind (V.10a), dürfte ihre Bedeutung für die Interpretation des Textes unterstreichen.

Anhand eines weiteren, unabhängigen Stilmittels ist ein großer Teil der durch die bisher dargestellten Elemente nicht direkt betroffenen Kola in das Netz der suffigierten Verbformen eingebunden: Die Passagen VV.4.5a.8 sowie VV.14-16b sind durch das gehäufte Auftreten semantisch eng verwandter Wörter gekennzeichnet. Im ersten Fall handelt es sich um Synonyme für Wasser: ים (4a), ים־סוף (4b), תְּהוֹמֹת (5a), מֵיִם (8a), תְּהוֹמֹת, נוֹלִים, ים (8b). Die zweite Passage bietet Wörter des Wortfeldes "Angst/Schrecken"⁽¹⁹⁾: יִרְגָּזוּן (14a), חִיל (14b), נִבְהִלוּ (15a), רָעַד (15b), נִמְגַּ (15c), פָּחַד, אִמְתָּה (16a). Als Stilmittel sind diese Wortgruppen durch verschiedene Umstände ausgewiesen: Jede der Gruppen umfasst genau sieben Wörter, also gleich viele⁽²⁰⁾. Die Wörter sind so im Text verteilt, dass nie mehr als ein Wort in einem Kolon auftritt, außer den beiden jeweils letzten Wörtern (V.8c und V.16a), die (annähernd) nebeneinanderstehen⁽²¹⁾. In VV.14-16a folgen die

⁽¹⁶⁾ Vgl. PROPP, *Exodus*, 505-506. u.ö.

⁽¹⁷⁾ V.a. HOWELL, "Poetic Analysis", 12-14.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Dasselbe Problem tritt natürlich auch bei der Gliederung in drei Strophen auf, wie sie beispielsweise Propp vornimmt. Vgl. seine Diskussion von V.12 (PROPP, *Exodus*, 528-531).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Vgl. HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 288; PROPP, *Exodus*, 533.

⁽²⁰⁾ Mit מְשֻׁלָּה dürfte weniger das Wasser als die Totenwelt gemeint sein.

⁽²¹⁾ Die Definition von "Kolon" ist umstritten. Meine Kola sind — zumindest im Fall der hier betroffenen Verse — identisch mit den kleinsten vollständigen Sätzen.

Kola, die sinnverwandte Wörter enthalten, lückenlos aufeinander; die Serie der Wasser-Wörter hingegen wird nach V.5a unterbrochen und setzt erst in V.8a wieder ein. Schließlich — und deshalb wurden sie ja überhaupt vorgestellt — sind die gehäuft auftretenden sinnverwandten Wörter mit den suffigierten Verbformen verknüpft: In V.5a ist יהוה Subjekt von יכסימו, in V.15b Subjekt von יאדחמו; die Verknüpfung erfolgt also über die beiden Verbformen, die im Rahmen der konzentrischen Struktur den “äußeren Ring” bilden. Durch diese Konstruktion werden das Wasser, mit dem JHWH die Ägypter vernichtet, und das Entsetzen, mit dem der die Feindvölker im Land lähmt, als gleichwertige “Instrumente zur Unschädlichmachung von Feinden” dargestellt⁽²²⁾. Die Serien sinnverwandter Wörter illustrieren einerseits die Parallelsetzung der besprochenen Heilsereignisse, das heißt, ihre Einordnung auf demselben heilsgeschichtlichen Niveau. Andererseits betonen sie auch die exklusive gegenseitige Zuordnung der beiden Ereignisse, die das Schilfmeerlied vornimmt, ihre einmalige Komplementarität, indem sie über die Suffixformen in den Versen 5 und 15 an der Spiegelstruktur des Textes beteiligt sind.

Auch die Verse 3 und 18 tragen zu der konzentrisch-parallelen Struktur des Textes bei. Beide Verse sind kurze, prägnante Aussagen über JHWH; in beiden Versen steht JHWH als Subjekt an erster Stelle. Während V.3 mit יהוה איש מלחמה JHWHs Handeln am Schilfmeer zusammenfasst, dem der erste Teil des Liedes gewidmet ist, bezieht sich V.18 auf JHWHs Thronen in seinem Heiligtum inmitten seines Volkes (V.17) und somit auf den zweiten Teil des Lieds⁽²³⁾. Als konzentrische Elemente sind die beiden Verse konzipiert, indem V.3 den ersten Teil eröffnet, V.18 hingegen den zweiten Teil abschließt.

Die Parallelstruktur unseres Textes manifestiert sich schließlich auch in dem zweimaligen Vorkommen des Wortes יד. Im ersten Fall ist es die Hand des Feindes, die danach giert, die Israeliten zu “enterben” (V.9), in V.17 haben JHWHs Hände ein Heiligtum geschaffen: hier ist offensichtlich der Zion gemeint, JHWHs “Eigentum” oder “Erbe” (נחלה)⁽²⁴⁾.

⁽²²⁾ Dennoch sieht zweifellos auch Propp, PROPP, *Exodus*, 537, (ebenso wie LOHFINK, “Siegeslied”, 122-124) richtig, wenn er schreibt: “...the peoples of vv 14-16 reenact the Sea’s role (v 8): at first tumultuous and liquid, they stand petrified while Israel crosses...”.

⁽²³⁾ So auch FREEDMAN, “Strophe and Meter”, 192.

⁽²⁴⁾ Gelegentlich ist in dem Berg auch der Sinai gesehen worden — erst kürzlich wieder von D.N. FREEDMAN in “Moses and Miriam. The Song of the Sea: Exodus 15:1-18,21”, *Realia Dei*. Essays in archaeology and biblical interpretation in honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr. at his retirement (Hrsg. P.H. WILLIAMS) (Atlanta 1999) 67-83. Der Inhalt des Schilfmeerlieds selbst aber spricht weit mehr dafür, den Berg als Zion denn als Sinai zu interpretieren. *Erstens*: Die in 15,14-15. erwähnten Völker gehören in den Zusammenhang der Auseinandersetzung um das verheißene Land. *Zweitens*: Das Verb עבר (V.16) bezieht sich — zumal, wenn es von Israel ausgesagt wird — mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit auf die Jordandurchquerung: Laut H. SPIECKERMANN, *Heilsgegenwart*. Eine Theologie der Psalmen (FRLANT 148; Göttingen 1989) 107, Anm. 35, betreffen “[e]twa ein Drittel der Belege für עבר mit Akkusativ [...] den Jordan. In den Berichten über den Jordandurchzug (Jos 3,1-5,1) begegnet die Wurzel עבר 21mal, während sie in der Schilfmeererzählung Ex 13-14. überhaupt nicht vorkommt — erst Ex 15,16 einerseits und Jos 4,23 andererseits stellen die Verbindung her. *Drittens*: Das Volk Israel ist auf dem Sinai in keiner Weise “eingepflanzt” worden (V.17); es hat sich zwar auch am Sinai eine Weile aufgehalten (Num 10,11), aber

3. Zusammenfassung und Folgerungen für die Literarkritik

Ex 15,1b-18 erweist sich als ein derart komplexes poetisches Kunstwerk, dass man spontan die Möglichkeit ausschließen kann, es sei vielleicht tatsächlich am Schilfmeer, unmittelbar nach dem bestandenen Abenteuer, gedichtet worden.

Die Grundstruktur ist gleichzeitig konzentrisch und parallel. Das Zentrum der Inklusion, die sich über den Text von V.5 bis V.17 erstreckt, befindet sich in den Versen 10 und 11. Es ist primär gekennzeichnet durch die mittlere der neun suffigierten Verbformen des Textes, die zugleich als einzige von ihnen im Perfekt steht: כָּסְמוּ. Um כָּסְמוּ herum legen sich in konzentrischen Ringen zwei jeweils in eindeutigen formalem und inhaltlichem Bezug stehende weitere Suffixformpaare: אֶחָלְמוּ und תִּבְלַעְמוּ in den Versen 7 bzw. 12 sowie יִכְסִימוּ und אֶחָזְמוּ in den Versen 5 bzw. 15. Das Textzentrum ist weiterhin gekennzeichnet durch den mittleren — erweiterten — von drei steigernden Parallelismen (V.11) und durch den Vergleich “wie Blei” (V.10b), der von dem zweimal in etwa gleichem Abstand vom Zentrum (V. 5 und V.16) vorkommenden Ausdruck “wie Stein” eingerahmt wird.

Die Parallelstruktur des Textes ist an zwei weiteren Paaren von suffigierten Verbformen festzumachen, deren erstes (תִּרְיֶשְׁמוּ und תִּמְלֹאֲמוּ in V.9) das Ende und zugleich den Höhepunkt des ersten Textabschnitts und deren zweites (וְהִסְעֵמוּ und וְהִבְאֲמוּ in V.17) das Ende und den Höhepunkt des zweiten Textabschnitts markiert. Der Höhepunkt des ersten Abschnitts geht dem Zentrum der Inklusion, V.10-11, unmittelbar voraus und verbindet sich mit ihm zum Kern des Gesamttextes. Zur Parallelstruktur sind ferner die beiden Stellen VV.4.5.8 und VV.14-16a zu rechnen, in denen sich je sieben sinnverwandte Wörter häufen, einmal aus dem Wortfeld “Wasser” und einmal aus dem Wortfeld “Schreck/Angst”. Ein weiteres Indiz für Parallelität ist schließlich die Erwähnung der “Hand” des Feindes in V.10 und der “Hände” JHWHs in V.17, also jeweils zum Schluss des ersten und des zweiten Teils.

Was folgt nun aus dem Dargelegten für die Literarkritik von Ex 15,1b-18? Durch die Identifizierung der Suffixstruktur, die in Kombination mit den steigernden Parallelismen und den beiden Passagen mit Worthäufungen den Text von V.4 bis V.17 abdeckt und dabei nur wenige kleine Lücken lässt, ist nicht nur aufgezeigt, dass der Text mit großer Sorgfalt gestaltet worden ist. Es dürfte damit gleichzeitig erwiesen sein, dass zumindest Ex 15,4-17 ein Text aus einem Guss ist. Die Verse 2-5.18 sind keine ältere Kurzversion⁽²⁵⁾.

der Ort oder zumindest das Symbol seines dauerhaften Bleibens ist eindeutig der Zion und nicht der Sinai. *Schließlich* ist die These der Entstehung des Schilfmeerlieds am Sinai mit der extremen Frühdatering, die Freedman in seinem neuen Aufsatz nicht korrigiert und somit wohl aufrechterhält (“Moses und Mirjam”, 68; vgl. FREEDMAN, “Strophe and Meter”, 202), gerade nicht vereinbar: Die Sinaitradition mag zwar alt sein — in den uns überlieferten Zusammenhang im Pentateuch eingefügt worden ist sie aber offensichtlich ziemlich spät. Von den fünfunddreißig Belegen des Namens “Sinai” im Alten Testament (vgl. W. GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* ad loc.) finden sich dreißig in eindeutig sekundären Rahmennotizen. Andere Belege wie Neh 9,13; Ps 68,9.18 müssen als jung gelten, Dtn 33,2 ist strittig, Ri 5,5 ein Nachtrag. Somit hat es mit großer Sicherheit keinerlei historischen Zug Israels vom Schilfmeer zum Sinai gegeben. Es entbehrt jeder Grundlage, die Entstehung des Schilfmeerliedes dorthin verlegen zu wollen.

Ebensowenig können die Verse 13-17 als späte Erweiterung abgetrennt werden⁽²⁶⁾. Die Auseinandersetzung mit den entsprechenden Argumenten erübrigt sich.

Gerade weil der Korpus der Verse 4-17 so deutlich aus einem Guss ist, fällt auf, dass V.2 in diese Struktur nicht eingebunden ist. Er ist lediglich über das Wort *וְ* mit V.13 liiert, der seinerseits formal nur mittels Alliteration mit V.12 Kontakt zum übrigen Text hat. Deshalb können diese beiden Verse dennoch von Anfang an an ihrem Ort im Text gestanden haben; möglicherweise sind sie doch mittels bisher unbemerkter Strukturelemente eindeutig eingebunden. Es ist aber auch nicht unplausibel anzunehmen, dass der Autor V.2 als Eingangslob konzipiert hat, das sich auf das gesamte Lied bezieht und mit der handlungsorientierten Struktur der suffigierten Verbformen absichtlich nicht verknüpft ist. Seine Aussage fügt sich ja überzeugend in den Zusammenhang ein.

Was V.13 betrifft, so hat der Poet die Verse 12 und 13 möglicherweise als Einheit gesehen; sie wären dann gemeinsam über die Suffixverbform in V.12 am Strukturgerüst beteiligt.

Die Verse 3 und 18 wirken ebenfalls vom sonstigen Text formal vergleichsweise abgehoben, ergänzen sich aber davon abgesehen als Eingangs- und Schlussvers gegenseitig hervorragend. Inhaltlich betrachtet, resümieren sie als prägnante Formeln den ersten (V.3) bzw. den zweiten Teil des Schilfmeerliedes (V.18) und können daher mit Recht als integrale Bestandteile des Textes verbucht werden.

V.1b endlich hat sein Korrelat in V.21 und kann wohl weder als ursprünglich zugehörig erwiesen noch als sekundär ausgeschieden werden⁽²⁷⁾.

Natürlich sind die im Rahmen dieses Artikels nur angedeuteten inhaltlichen Schlussfolgerungen aus der dargestellten Textstruktur bereits mehr oder weniger bekannt und in vielen Publikationen so oder ähnlich nachzulesen. Um aber begründen zu können, dass eine bestimmte Interpretation sachgemäß ist und eine andere nicht, sind Formargumente ein entscheidendes Kriterium. In dieser Hinsicht könnte der hier vorgestellte Bauplan den Fundus der Argumente in der Exegese des Schilfmeerliedes bereichern.

4. Anhang: Ex 15,1b-18

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־נָאֵה נָאֵה | 1 |
| סוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בַּיָּם: | |
| עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה | 2 |
| וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה | |
| זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶנְדוּוּ | |
| אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִי וְאֶרְמָנָהוּ: | |
| יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה | 3 |
| יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ: | |

⁽²⁵⁾ Gegen A. CAQUOT, “Cantique de la mer et miracle de la mer”, *La protohistoire d’Israël. De l’exode à la monarchie* (Hrsg. E.-M. LAPEROUSAZ u.a.) (Paris 1990) 67-85, hier: 71.

⁽²⁶⁾ Gegen DOZEMAN, “The Song of the Sea”, 98.

⁽²⁷⁾ Vgl. J.C. GERTZ, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung*. Untersuchungen zur Exodustradition des Pentateuchs (FRLANT 186; Göttingen 2000) 192-193.

| | | |
|---|----|------------------------------------|
| מרכבת פרעה וחילו ירה בים ומבחר שלשיו טבעו בים־סוף: | 4 | |
| תחמת יכסימו | 5 | 2. Ring |
| ירדו במצולת כמוראבן: | | |
| ימינך יהוה נאדרי בכח | 6 | |
| ימינך יהוה תרעץ אויב: | | |
| וברב נאונך תהרס קמִיך | 7 | |
| תשלח חרנך יאכלמו כקש: | | 1. Ring |
| וברוח אפיך נערמו מים | 8 | |
| נצבו כמור־נד נולים | | |
| קפאו תחמת בלביים: | | |
| אמר אויב ארדף אשיג | 9 | |
| אחלק שלל תמלאמו נפשי | | <i>Höhepunkt/ Abschluß 1. Teil</i> |
| אוריק חרבי תורישמו ידי: | | |
| נשפת ברוחך כסמו ים | 10 | Zentrum |
| צללו כעופרת במים אדירים: | | |
| מ־כמכה באלם יהוה | 11 | |
| מי כמכה נאדר בקדש | | |
| נורא תחלת עשה פלא: | | |
| נשית ימינך תבלעמו ארץ: | 12 | 1. Ring |
| נחית בחסדך עסיו נאלת: | 13 | |
| נהלת בעזך אל־נוה קדשך | | |
| שמעו עמים ירגזון | 14 | |
| חיל אחז ישבי פלשת: | | |
| אז נבהלו אלופי אדום | 15 | |
| אילי מואב יאחזמו רעד | | 2. Ring |
| נמו כל ישבי כנען: | | |
| תפל עליהם אימתה ופחד | 16 | |
| בגדל זרועך ידמו כאבן | | |
| עד־יעבר עמך יהוה | | |
| עד־יעבר עסיו קנית: | | |
| תבאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך | 17 | <i>Höhepunkt/ Abschluß 2. Teil</i> |
| מכון לשבתך פעלת יהוה | | |
| מקדש אדני כוננו ידיך: | | |
| יהוה ימלך לעלם ועד: | 18 | |

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SUMMARY

The crucial structural element in Ex 15,1b–18 is the 3rd person masculine plural suffix מו- (or מ־) which is found in nine verbal forms that are distributed over the entire text. Other structural elements, which are formal and have to do with the content, harmoniously fit into a macrostructure that has been shown to be concentrically parallel. In view of the convincing composition which extends beyond the Song, the original literary unity of the Song of the Sea of Reeds can hardly be doubted any more.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Stephen B. CHAPMAN, *The Law and the Prophets. A Study in Old Testament Canon Formation* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 27). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2000. xvii-356 p. 16 × 23,5. € 89

Nachdem die Frage nach dem biblischen Kanon lange Zeit über als rein historische erachtet und behandelt worden ist, hatte der Aufbruch vor einigen Jahrzehnten in der nordamerikanischen Bibelwissenschaft im Kontext des sogenannten *canonical approach* bzw. *canon criticism* den biblischen Kanon neu ins Bewusstsein gehoben und seine Bedeutsamkeit für die Bibelauslegung erkennen lassen. Die fundamentale Unterscheidung von *Kanonisierung* und *kanonischem Prozess*, die B.S. Childs eingeführt hat, hat einerseits den Blick dafür geöffnet, dass das Phänomen des Kanons nicht nachträglich zu vorhandenen Schriften oder Büchern hinzukommt, sondern ihnen, und das heißt letztendlich ihrer Entstehung inhärent ist, andererseits aber auch dazu geführt, dass das Werden des Kanons sehr eng aus literarischen Prozessen heraus verstanden worden ist. Hier setzt die zu besprechende Dissertation (Yale University 1998) ein, indem sie hinter die Standardfragen der aktuellen Forschung nach Differenz und/oder Gemeinsamkeit zwischen dem Prozess der literarischen Entwicklung und der Formation des Kanons am Beispiel der Kanontexte von *Tora* und *Propheten* der Hebräischen Bibel zurückzugehen versucht, um die Entstehung des biblischen Kanons aus einer Klärung der Frage nach dem Wesen des Kanons zu beantworten. Dazu greift er auf das literaturwissenschaftliche Modell von C. Altieri zurück, dem es darum geht, Wesen und Funktion eines Kanons, näherhin literarischer Werke in einem kulturellen Horizont, zu erfassen. Altieri greift dazu auf die moralphilosophische Unterscheidung zwischen „Präferenzen“ und „festen Urteilen“ des kanadischen Philosophen Charles Taylor zurück. Auf die Formation des Kanons angewendet bedeutet das, dass ein Forum entsteht, das im Diskurs zwischen den Präferenzen im Sinne der persönlichen Vorlieben von Individuen oder Gruppen und den festen Urteilen im Sinne von Wertesystemen zusammenwirken. Der (literarische) Kanon wirkt somit nicht konservierend, sondern belebend, weil in ihm eine Verbindung zur Vergangenheit hergestellt wird, die zur Auseinandersetzung herausfordert, um zu einer aktuellen Orientierung zu verhelfen. Die Funktion von Kanones ist in dieser Vorstellung entscheidend auf den gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Diskurs ausgerichtet: “In concluding, Altieri argues that canons: (1) institutionalize an ongoing cultural process of idealization; (2) establish a source of social authority by providing a cultural ‘grammar’; and

(3) set the 'projective dimensions' for contemporary writing by new authors and critics" (96). Diesen Ansatz versucht Chapman nun auf den biblischen Kanon anzuwenden, wobei er sich des Unterschieds durchaus bewusst ist, dass nämlich Altieri von einem fließenden, sich verändernden Kanon westlicher Literatur ausgeht, während er mit einem in der Vergangenheit fixierten und somit vorgegebenen Kanon bei der Bibel zu tun hat.

Gleichwohl erkennt Chapman eine enge Verbindung zur Theorie von Altieri darin, dass der fixierte alttestamentliche Kanon unterschiedliche, ja gelegentlich widersprüchliche Stimmen vereinigt. Während diese Beobachtung traditionell entweder als Hinweis auf miteinander konkurrierende Gruppen oder als Kompromiss gedeutet wurde, sieht Chapman hierin das Wachhalten eines Forums zum Diskurs, so dass er in Aufnahme und Weiterführung von Altieri den Kanon als "theologische Grammatik" beschreibt. Drei Eigenschaften des Kanons als theologische Grammatik hebt Chapman nun besonders hervor. Zuerst die "Selbstunterwerfung", die darin zu erkennen ist, dass die "Produzenten/Tradenten" des Kanons ihre Präferenzen der Intention eines Kanons unterwerfen, insofern sie durch ihn an der Formierung einer Rahmenstruktur mitwirken, die eine Bandbreite theologischer Ideale an kommende Generationen zu vermitteln vermag. Die "Bandbreite" sieht Chapman vor allen Dingen in den beiden Kanonteilen von Tora und Propheten repräsentiert, die er gerade nicht im Sinne der Standardtheorie eines literarischen Prozesses als Rangfolge verstanden wissen will, sondern eigenständige Positionen, die gegeneinander stehen, um einen Diskurs zu ermöglichen und zu initiieren. Eng damit zusammen hängt die zweite Eigenschaft des Kanons als theologischer Grammatik. Sie betrifft das Nebeneinander von Tora und Propheten, das Chapman vom Standpunkt der Kanonisierung her als gleichzeitig und hermeneutisch als dialektisch beschreibt. Zuletzt schaut Chapman auf das innere Netzwerk des Kanons, insofern die immer schon beobachteten vielfältigen intertextuellen Bezüge im Kanon aufgenommen werden, diese "kanonischen Hilfslinien" werden von Chapman nicht als Hinweis auf ein und dieselbe Gruppe von Kanontradenten gedeutet, sondern als Zeichen für ein gemeinsames Kanonbewusstsein verschiedener Redaktionen.

Die genannten Aspekte des Kanons als theologische Grammatik führen zu der traditionellen Frage, ob der Kanon eine *Sammlung autoritativer Schriften* ist, oder eine *autoritative Sammlung von Schriften*. Chapman nimmt diese Frage als Kontroverse zwischen den Begriffen "Kanon" und "(Heilige) Schrift" ('*Canon*' versus '*Scripture*', 106-110) auf. Von seinen Vorgaben her betrachtet er den *Kanon* aufgrund seiner inneren Vernetzungsstruktur als Gerüst zur Interpretation, was der Begriff der "theologische Grammatik" zum Ausdruck bringt, während demgegenüber der Begriff der *Heiligen Schrift*, der vom Gedanken der Inspiration her verstanden wird, auf die einzelnen *Schriften* bezogen wird, die noch nicht in einen deutenden, intertextuellen Zusammenhang stehen. Mangelnde Evidenz für einen Zusammenhang der späteren Kanonteile "Tora" und "Propheten" bringt Chapman dazu, als Trennungslinie zwischen "Schrift" und "Kanon" das Aufkommen des Deuteronomismus anzusetzen. In seinem dritten Kapitel versucht er dazu schließlich diese deuteronomistische Kanonformation von den Ecktexten in Dtn 34,10-12 und Mal 3,23-24 her zu umschreiben. "In sum, both the

appendices to Deuteronomy and the appendices to Malachi – within their respective books and within the larger canon – function explicitly to combine Law and Prophets within a single ‘story’ about God. The true God, the God of Israel, is the God who has given the Law *and* the Prophets to his people. Together, the Law and the Prophets represent the two ‘chapters’ of *his* story – two dispensations within a single economy of God. For the deuteronomists, Israel’s theological ‘grammar’ at its most basic was this: the God of Israel is the God of the Law and the Prophets. It was this deuteronomistic, theological ‘grammar’ which thus provided the origin, norm and goal of Old Testament canon formation” (148-149). Im Folgenden sichert Chapman seine These durch die Untersuchung weiterer Textbeispiele ab, um schließlich durch aufgrund von *internal and external evidences* die traditionell vorausgesetzte Vorrangstellung der Tora infrage zu stellen. Mit dem Ergebnis der These einer Doppelautorität von Tora und Propheten in vorrabbinischer Zeit schießt er diesen Teil ab. Diese These bildet schließlich auch einen Eckpfeiler seiner gesamten Argumentation, die er im Schlussteil “Reconstruction and Conclusions” (283-292) in Bezug auf die Herausbildung des biblischen Kanons wie folgt zusammenfasst:

“Old Testament *scripture* began with the conviction that the preservation of certain words and deeds in writing would form an enduring indictment of self-interest (e.g., Deut 12:8) and a persuasive reminder of God’s goodness and mercy for future generations (e.g., Deut 12:28). The Old Testament *canon* emerged in the effort within Israel to transmit its differing insights and experiences of God in such a way that their internal consistency could be explored and affirmed, but also so that their particularities would continue to stimulate, provoke and challenge (e.g., Deut 4:2; 13:1 [12:32]).

Thus, at the level of its *witness* the Old Testament is a statement of *ideals*, but *not* ideologies. The distinction is crucial, but rarely observed. Israel’s ideals have clearly been shaped and transmitted within specific historical situations and cultural contexts, but the peculiar effect of its religious understanding has been to indict the self (e.g., Deut 6:10-12; 9:4-5). This means that a viewpoint finding expression within the canon has been recognized by the community as an insight leading to self-discipline and the good of the other, and not merely as a propagandistic effort on the part of the politically powerful to restrict or condemn those with whom they disagree” (283).

Aus diesen Anfängen heraus ergibt sich für Chapman die Etablierung der zweiteiligen Grundstruktur von “Tora und Propheten” ab der Mitte des 6. Jahrhunderts vor Christus. Das gleichwertige Nebeneinander dieser beiden Größen bleibt seiner Meinung nach stabil bis ins 4. Jahrhundert.

Den späteren dritten Kanonteil der Hebräischen Bibel, die “Schriften” (*Ketubim*) berücksichtigt Chapman zur Bestätigung seiner These insofern als er darauf hinweist, dass es keine dreiteiligen Formeln gibt, sondern das Kanonbewusstsein von der zweiteiligen Form “Tora und Schriften” bestimmt bleibt.

Chapman hat mit seiner Arbeit der Kanonforschung einen wichtigen Impuls gegeben, insofern er literarhistorische und hermeneutische Fragestellungen miteinander verknüpft hat. Das von ihm so stark herausgearbeitete Konstitutivum der Zweigliedrigkeit von Tora und Propheten scheint mir aber

noch eine weitere und tiefere Bedeutung zu haben, als sie von Chapman angezeigt wird, denn auch die Septuagintatraditionen repräsentieren im Kern diese Zweigliedrigkeit, allerdings in einer prophetischen Perspektive – gegenüber der Tora-Perspektive, die im TaNaK wirksam wird (cf. Jos 1,7-9 mit Ps 1) –, denn die spätere “Schriften” werden in der Septuagintatradition in den Kanonteil “Propheten” integriert und eben nicht als eigener Teil angefügt. Erst die “Kanonformation” der christlichen Bibel aus einem “Alten Testament” und einem “Neuen Testament” lässt die innere Kanongrenze in der Bibel Israels zugunsten der neuen Zweierstruktur von AT und NT (cf. C. Dohmen/[G. Stemberger], *Hermeneutik der Jüdischen Bibel und des Alten Testaments* [Stuttgart 1996] 144-154) aufbrechen.

Es ist aber zweifellos das große Verdienst der vorliegenden Arbeit, das Gewicht der Doppelstruktur von Tora und Propheten hermeneutisch herausgearbeitet zu haben. Gleichwohl bedürfte es vertiefter rezeptions-ästhetisch orientierter Analyse, wenn man die TaNaK-Struktur im Gegenüber zur Eingliedrigkeit im Alten Testament (mit prophetischer Präferenz) diskursiv erfassen will.

Das Ausgangskonzept einer theologischen Grammatik als Interpretationsgerüst wirkt dabei instruktiv und inspirierend, aber es steht auch in der Gefahr in das Feld der überholten Suche nach einer theologischen Mitte des Alten Testaments zu geraten, denn das, was die Kanonformation zusammenhält, lässt sich nicht konkret an den Texten ablesen, sondern ist aus einer Abstraktion zu gewinnen. “Rather than merely expressive of a political program or even the *status quo*, these transcendent qualities had and continue to have as their purpose a continued engagement with God. On the basis of this hermeneutical fulcrum, I intend to reweigh the evidence concerning Old Testament canon formation in an effort to identify the ways in which the biblical tradents not only subordinated their own interests and contexts, but actively worked to construct formulations and frameworks which would communicate a *range* of theological *ideals* to future generations” (102). Nimmt man Chapmans Ansatz auf, und dies ist für die weitere Diskussion um den Kanon geboten, dann müssen die Möglichkeiten, aber auch die Grenzen vor allem an diesem Punkt kritisch berücksichtigt werden.

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Gary D. SALYER, *Vain Rhetoric*. Private Insight and Public Debate in Ecclesiastes (JSOTSS 327). Sheffield, Academic Press, 2001. 443 p. 16 × 24. £60.00 – \$95.00

This book is a revision of a doctoral dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Graduate Theological Union and the University of California at Berkeley. In my opinion, however, this revision could have been done somewhat more carefully, for there are too many typographical errors, and

even grammatical mistakes now and then. Chapter 1 is entitled “Prolegomena: Toward a Theory of Reading Scriptural Texts”. “The interests which underlie this study are rhetorical and literary in nature” (36). More in particular, the author wants to analyse how the literary use of first-person discourse induces persuasion or dissuasion for the contemporary reader of Ecclesiastes, namely how this ancient book functions as a scriptural text today. He does not share some of the interests and beliefs of those who try to reconstruct historically the original audience. In some circles of bible study, there has been a shift from an emphasis on the *Sitz im Leben* of a text to the *Sitz im Leser*. In this line Salyer argues for a non-historical set of assumptions based on the hermeneutical theory of P. Ricoeur, J. Ellis and others. He considers the basic configuration of rhetorical, reader-response, narrative, and textuality approaches as a better way of getting at the issues addressed in canon critical circles during the 1970’s and 1980’s. Chapter 2, “Reading Ecclesiastes as a First-Person Scriptural Text”, is precisely an introduction to narrative, and reader-response perspectives in particular. It deals with narrative theory and first-person texts; that is, based on S. Chatman’s theory of narrative communication, it discusses questions about the implied author, the narrator, the narratee, and the implied reader. The latter is not a person, but “the set of beliefs the story/text presupposes for a good reading” (W. Booth). Salyer contends that the implied reader of Ecclesiastes faces the problem of multiple narrators (Qoheleth and the Epilogist) and multiple narratees (‘my son’ and the Epilogist at least). For a good understanding one has to realise that Salyer utilises the term ‘Ecclesiastes’ (Eccl) when he refers to the discourse strategies of the book, normally the implied author; but with ‘Qoheleth’ (Qoh) he refers to the first-person narrator the implied author makes use of. “Qoheleth is simply a textual device the reader responds to while reading” (59). According to Salyer, at issue in the book of Eccl is the question of how one validates the wisdom of the individual. More in particular, the implied author seems to call attention to the latent perils and prospects of gaining wisdom by allowing the reader to listen into a sly debate between the narrator, Qoh, and his presenter, the frame-narrator. Qoh’s systematic reliance on private insight is given an ironic treatment by the implied author, and that communicates a certain sense of unreliability to the implied reader regarding the sufficiency of Qoh’s method of argumentation. In my opinion, this example reveals a weak point in this approach, because my own implied author shows rather the weakness of traditional wisdom or, in Salyer’s words, public knowledge. This means that, in principle, every real reader can find his/her own implied author. Salyer recognises that problem and, accordingly, he sketches out his own background and presuppositions as a flesh-and-blood reader. But I am not sure that he really solves the problem in a satisfactory way.

Chapter 2 also treats first-person argumentative texts, for that is what Eccl appears to be, namely an argumentative text which utilises narrative features, rather than a narrative text. First-person texts have their own specific built-in persuasive effects. An I-narrator is a person who is instructing us what we as readers need to know. Therefore it is necessary for a reader to engage himself/herself in a process of characterising the narrator. On the other hand, for a biblical critic, the use of historical information is mandatory in order to

read the text properly, and “reader critics validate by reading along with other critics” (96). That means that Salyer attaches special importance to the historical-critical method as a partner in his reading process. On the other hand, he insists on the paramount importance of reading the text in a linear way, that is, beginning from the first verse, and ending with the last verse. So, when reading the beginning of the text, the reader does not rely on information further on in the text. This view is correct, but that does not exclude the right of the critical reader to take account of that further information in a second or nth reading. Salyer is also convinced that in texts there is a core of data that functions to restrain and to guide the meaning which we as readers both take and develop from the text.

In Chapter 3, the design of Eccl is characterised as a rhetoric of ambiguity, namely a literary design which frustrates the reader in such a way that the ‘whole truth’ is never disclosed in a satisfactory way. Therefore Salyer offers an overview of reader problems in this book and discusses some idiosyncratic grammatical ambiguities which generate opacity. In his critical reading of Eccl, his method with regard to these problems is to consult the various conjectures, to weigh them on their own merits, and to set the various proposals against the broader background of the norms established by the text. If there are no compelling solutions for a passage, the confusion is noted and the effect that opacity has on the reader is analysed. As for structural ambiguities, the author presents an overview of reading strategies found in exegetical literature: G. Castellino’s reading focused on Qoh’s use of first-person discourse and its directly addressing the narratee from 4,17 on; S. de Jong’s on Qoh’s observations; A. Wright’s on the text riddled with refrains, and those suggested by S. Brown, R.N. Whybray and F. Rousseau, which, in my opinion, are weaker. All these are ambiguities at the textual level. Salyer is convinced, however, that the major rhetorical strengths and weaknesses of Eccl are not to be found at these levels, but at the *persona* level, “in the book’s audacious use of first-person discourse by the implied author” (166).

In Chapter 4, the author argues for a fictive understanding of the character Qohemoth, who is the protagonist. In the encompassing third-person narration, an ironic dimension is created regarding this protagonist’s reliance upon private knowledge as the sole [I doubt this!] means of achieving wisdom. Hence, Salyer views “the ironic relationship between *private insight* and *public knowledge* as the foundational element for understanding the text’s total rhetorical impact on the reader” (285; emphasis mine). In Chapters 5 and 6, the author analyses, by means of a linear reading of the book, the specific persuasive and dissuasive effects of the *narrator’s* ethos on the reader (Salyer’s emphasis). Chapter 5 deals with Eccl 1,1–6,9, which consists of three aesthetic and ideological movements. In Eccl 1–2 the implied author hints at the limits of a self-centred and private epistemology, thereby ironising and satirising the protagonist. But in 3,1–4,16, he criticises the knowledge of the community, calling attention to its inherent darkness and limitations through Qoh’s observations and subtle comments. Based on this epistemological situation, in 4,17–6,9 he admonishes the reader to enjoy life as best as he/she can. This part of the book has the literary character of a vain rhetoric with a constant pendulum swinging between attractive and unattractive ethos [my question: (un)attractive to whom?]. Qoh is here

characterised as an intimate pessimist. In the second part of Eccl (6,10–12,14), treated in Chapter 6, Qoh moves to an ethos of radical scepticism. Thus he starts this second half of Eccl in 6,10–12 with epistemological nihilism, asking the question: ‘Who knows what is good?’ The theme of Eccl 7,1–8,17 is “the ethically blind public”. In 7,1–13 a proverbial reflection depicts Qoh as a traditional sage “who has a jaded countenance to his rhetorical visage” (338). Salyer underlines a couple of times that the implied author, by interrupting in 7,27 Qoh’s conclusion with ‘says Qoheleth’, stresses that this is the viewpoint of an individual, and thus accentuates the subjectivity of such a conclusion and satirises the narrator’s methodology. At the end, the commentary advances a bit faster: 9,1–6: The depths of scepticism — Who knows about God?; 9,7–10: Reclaiming the value of life — Knowing how to enjoy life; 9,11–12: The unpredictable and public knowledge; 9,13–12,7: Asking the narratee to fill in the blanks. The last point means that the reader must infer the meaning of the individual proverbs. Salyer calls this “a rhetoric of inference”. Eccl concludes with a public perspective on a private figure (Eccl 12,8–14).

In a summary of reader relationships, Salyer briefly summarises Narrator-Narratee, Narrator-Implied Reader, Implied Author-Narrator, Implied Author-Narratee and Implied Author-Implied Reader Relations. “This intricate set of relationships creates a very rich text filled with irony and satire ... Whoever composed this text was indeed a wise person possessing an uncanny knack for perceiving the ironic” (378). To conclude, Salyer asks the question “What do we mean by vain rhetoric?”. And, in short, his answer is: begging the reader to disagree, emphasising the vanity of human rhetorical existence, and illocutionary speech-acts that literally re-enact life’s absurdity (“provide the reader with a narrative experience of life’s absurdity” [397]).

This monograph is full of interesting remarks and captivating analyses, and is a good introduction to, and application of, a reader-oriented approach. But at the same time, I hardly ever had so many questions about a book on Qoh, or Eccl for that matter. I cannot sum up all the points on which I disagree with it. From the very first page, I had some objections, namely when I read that the concept of ‘authorial intention’ is hypothetical and often nefarious, and should be replaced by a reader-oriented approach, because I was convinced, and the reading of this book confirmed my opinion, that the latter is as much or as little hypothetical as the former. The implied author and implied reader are nice innovations, but they do not exist as such; in fact they are a screen which the literary critic puts between the real author and the real reader. And any real reader will make his/her own implied reader depending on his/her own competence in the Hebrew language and literature, and his/her presuppositions. As said before, Salyer admits this subjective side of his approach. On the other hand, in chapters 5 and 6, the commentary proper, he offers a number of thoughtful insights and correct interpretations, because of his linguistic and literary competence, which helps him to make thoughtful use of good exegetical tradition. But in the meantime, based on his reading strategy, he adds too much of his own insights so that I get the feeling that the “intellectual prowess, spiritual acuity or literary sophistication” (379) is his rather than the author’s. Space does not allow me to cite examples, but the

intelligent reader will be able to judge for himself/herself, and will agree or disagree with me, depending on the 'school' he or she belongs to.

This way of analysing and commenting Ecclesiastes has its own merits and offers interesting and pleasant reading. But, in spite of all its sophistication, I sometimes have some doubts about its scientific and objective value. Biblical science has to work with controllable data and verifiable statements; otherwise its very nature as a science is endangered. In my opinion, this monograph often comes too close to 'homiletic' or 'literary' discourse. And there is also a major theological reason why I prefer the study of authorial intention. Eccl is not only a literary text, it is also a religious document. As part of the canon, it is accepted by the faithful of different denominations as a book endowed with 'authority'. To avoid possible abuses of authority or, more simply, harmful misunderstandings, it is of no secondary importance to substantiate what the original author really meant, if we want to establish with a sufficient degree of objectivity the critical value of 'authoritative' tenets culled from the Bible.

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Antoon SCHOORS

Moyna MCGLYNN, *Divine Judgement and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe, 139). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2001. xi-294 p. DM 98.

Cette étude est la version revue d'une thèse dirigée par John M.G. Barclay et défendue en 1999 à l'université de Glasgow. L'appendice (225-245), sur l'histoire et la réception de Sg, a été ajouté à la demande de l'éditeur, Martin Hengel.

M.M. a souhaité rendre son travail intéressant pour les spécialistes, mais aussi lisible et instructif pour ceux qui abordent pour la première fois Sg et la LXX (cf. vii). Je reconnais sans ambages qu'elle a parfaitement réalisé son projet. Son livre est même fascinant et l'on ne peut qu'en recommander la lecture aux spécialistes comme aux néophytes.

L'angle sous lequel M.M. relit Sg est celui du jugement et de la miséricorde divines. Il s'agit essentiellement de la thématique développée en Sg 11,15-12,27 («The Interpretive Key of 11,15-12,27: the Mercy Dialogue», 25-53), c'est-à-dire dans la digression où l'auteur justifie le caractère dérisoire des plaies provoquées par des bestioles qui frappèrent soit les Égyptiens lors de l'exode des Hébreux soit les Cananéens lors de la conquête de leur terre. M.M. montre que, dans cette digression, la miséricorde de Dieu lorsqu'il juge peut être une clé de lecture de l'ensemble du livre. D'une certaine façon, c'est reprendre l'idée de James M. Reese qui, pour prouver l'unité de Sg, relevait ce qu'il appelait des *flashbacks*, puis quelques thèmes récurrents à travers tout le livre, mais non pas celui que retient M.M.

Pour le montrer, M.M. relit l'un après l'autre, à la lumière de 11,15-12,27, les ensembles littéraires qui forment Sg: «The Apocalyptic Drama (1,1-6,21)» (54-88), où 6,1-21 est vu comme une transition; puis "The Creation of Righteousness — the Wisdom Chapters 6-10" (89-131); 13,1-15,19, "The Corruption of Life — the Review of False Gods: Chapters 13-15" (132-169); et enfin "The Seven Diptychs - the Judgement of Egypt and the Transcendent 'Ideas' of God (11,1-14; 16,1-19,22)" (170-219). Le tout est encadré par une Introduction (1-24) et une brève Conclusion (220-224).

La clé de lecture retenue par M.M. me paraît fondée et je ne puis qu'admirer la connaissance qu'elle a acquise du livre, non seulement des différentes péripécies, mais surtout des rapports précis qu'elle relève sans cesse entre elles. C'est là que sa lecture de Sg est des plus riches et des plus convaincantes. Au fond, elle fournit avec profondeur une nouvelle preuve de l'unité de Sg.

Il me semble cependant qu'elle prend parfois des positions qui me paraissent trop peu argumentées et même sujettes à caution. Ainsi l'Introduction présente rapidement les principales opinions des spécialistes, mais sans guère les discuter. M.M. tient pour l'unité de Sg et elle propose de fonder cette unité à partir des questions qu'on lit en 5,5-8; 8,5-6; 9,13-17; 11,21.25; 12,12.20, mais sans tenir compte de celle qui vient encore en 13,9. Pourquoi donc? Les questions qu'elle retient lui paraissent s'expliquer par un genre littéraire auquel aucun critique n'avait pensé jusqu'à présent, l'*aition* (4-9), et elle tente de le prouver à partir des *Aetia* de Callimaque. Malgré l'appel à un article d'Annette Harder paru en 1993 et à quelques autres études sur le sujet, je ne crois pas que la proposition de M.M. convaincra. Et cela tout d'abord parce qu'une telle proposition devrait être beaucoup plus argumentée ou au moins offrir des arguments probants. Or, le choix des propositions interrogatives auquel elle s'arrête est factice. On ne peut en effet en montrer la valeur probante au plan de la construction littéraire que l'auteur de Sg a voulu donner à son livre. Au reste, ces interrogatives ne seront pas vraiment la clé de l'interprétation des différentes parties de Sg telle que la propose M.M. Ensuite, parce que proposer un genre littéraire pour un texte demande une comparaison entre des textes où le genre en question est utilisé et le texte où l'on croit en retrouver l'emploi. M.M. est sensible au fait que, dans l'œuvre mentionnée de Callimaque, A. Harder trouve des structures concentriques ou une «ring-composition» (4 et n. 13). Il est exact qu'il en est de même en Sg. Mais cela suffit-il à rendre compte de l'ensemble de la structure de Sg, d'autant que M.M., qui parle souvent de structure dans son étude, me paraît n'avoir pas suffisamment distingué entre structure littéraire et structure thématique? J'aurai à y revenir. En outre, une structure littéraire concentrique n'est pas propre au genre de l'*aition*. Enfin il faudrait montrer en quoi les propositions actuellement en débat au sujet du genre littéraire de Sg ne rendent pas compte vraiment de la totalité du livre. Bref, bien qu'elle offre aussi un état des questions posées par Sg, l'Introduction me paraît superficielle et capable de fourvoyer le lecteur. Je dirais la même chose du début de la Conclusion. L'intérêt du livre de M.M. peut se passer de cet encadrement trop fragile.

Pour ce qui est de la composition de Sg, M.M. a bien noté (20, n. 78),

comme la plupart des critiques, que l'auteur est d'une grande habileté pour passer d'un sujet à un autre, qu'il établit de subtiles transitions entre les parties de son œuvre. M.M. le montre à propos de 6,1-21 (86-88, 102-108), mais, à la lire, on ne peut plus savoir où commence, pour elle, le «Praise-Poem» sur la Sagesse: en 6,12 (22) ou en 6,22? Je cite : «Verse 21 is the last time that the kings are addressed by the speaker, and it provides a convenient finishing point, although, in fact, the theme of wisdom's role is well established by this verse. The last exhortation to the kings occurs in 6,11 and, thematically, this might be a better conclusion» (86). Le lecteur s'y retrouvera-t-il, surtout que la dernière adresse aux rois se lit en fait en 6,25? On voit la confusion entre structure littéraire et structure thématique. La même remarque vaut aussi pour la structure de Sg 13-15 (134-138, 167-169).

J'en viens à présent à quelques observations qui touchent à la compréhension du texte de Sg. Pourquoi définir 11,15-12,27 «The Mercy Dialogue» (25)? En supposant que dialogue signifie que l'auteur s'adresse au Seigneur, le fait débute en 9,1 et se poursuit jusqu'au dernier verset, 19,22. Pourquoi, à propos de Sg 7-9, parler de deux prières, en 7,7 et 9,4 (96, 99, 107, 120), alors que 7,7 sera repris en 8,21, verset qui ouvre Sg 9? Pourquoi voir dans ces deux prières supposées des références à 1 R 3 et 1 R 8 (121, 162)? D'accord pour 1 R 3,4-15, mais la prière de Salomon lors de la dédicace du temple est-elle vraiment sous-jacente à Sg 9? J'en doute. Sg 11,16 peut-il être vraiment rapproché du talion (31)? Il m'a semblé que non (cf. M. Gilbert, «Les raisons de la modération divine (Sagesse 11,21-12,2)», *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* [éds. A. Caquot - M. Delcor] [AOAT 215; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981] 183-191). En 12,5 (45, 158), derrière les Cananéens, qu'on ne peut accuser de cannibalisme, l'auteur de Sg ne vise-t-il pas, des légendes de la tragédie grecque? Est-il exact que les frelons d'Ex 23,28 «function as a metaphor» (47)? A propos de 6,22-7,6, selon L. Mariès (104), M.M. ne rend pas exactement le texte français qu'elle a cité (92). En Sg 17,3, je ne vois pas où est l'allusion au «fire from the storms» (200). Par contre, la façon de comprendre la série des diptyques de Sg 11,1-14; 16-19 (190) est à retenir.

L'appendice est évidemment bienvenu et il est bien mené. Il me suggère quelques remarques. Je ne connais pas de copie de la Sagesse de Ben Sira en araméen que l'on aurait trouvée à Qumrân (230, n. 22). M.M. pourrait-elle prouver que Sg a été lu «in some synagogues» (230)? A propos de Jérôme (242), s'impose désormais l'étude de J.I. Pock, *Sapientia Salomonis. Hieronymus' Exegese des Weisheitsbuches im Licht der Tradition* (Diss. der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz 89; Graz 1992). Pour Augustin, l'ouvrage fondamental est celui d'A.-M. La Bonnardière, *Biblia Augustiniana. A.T. Le Livre de la Sagesse* (Études Augustiniennes Paris 1970). Quant aux deux lignes consacrées à Thomas d'Aquin (243), elles tronquent l'avis de C. Larcher auquel M.M. se réfère: en réalité, Larcher (*Études sur le Livre de la Sagesse* [ÉB; Paris 1969] 65) écrivait que Thomas «semble se montrer hésitant au sujet de l'autorité de certains deutérocanoniques. Mais sa pensée personnelle s'exprime nettement dans son discours de bachelier biblique», à savoir que, pour l'Église, ces livres font partie des Écritures. L'étude fondamentale en la matière est toujours celle de P. Synave, «Le canon

scripturaire de saint Thomas d'Aquin», *RB* 33 (1924) 522-533, et C. Spicq, «Thomas d'Aquin», *DTC* XV,1 (1946) 697-698, y renvoie lui aussi.

Ce que je noterai à présent peut sembler de l'acribie et je prie M.M. d'excuser ce relevé de détails qui déparent son travail. La vocalisation de l'unique expression hébraïque contenue dans cette étude est mal placée (86, n. 108). L'accentuation de mots grecs n'est pas correcte: αὐτῶς (124), αὐτῇ (127, 130, n. 114), οὕτως (183, n. 56). Au milieu de la p. 87, le renvoi à la p. 109 «above» est impossible; serait-ce à la p. 72? M.M. renvoie (19, n. 74) à une de mes études, mais elle ne la mentionne pas dans sa bibliographie; il doit s'agir de mon article «Wisdom Literature», *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period. Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. M.E. Stone) (Compendium Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum II,2; Assen - Philadelphia 1984) 283-324, mais je n'y ai pas dit ce que M.M. m'attribue. A la même page, n. 77, elle renvoie à un autre de mes articles datant de 1970, mais la pagination est erronée et je ne sais ce que signifie le chiffre 76. M.M. renvoie aussi à une étude de Robson parue en 1989 (230, n. 20), mais la bibliographie ignore cet auteur que j'ai en vain cherché à identifier et, de toute façon, M.M. pouvait vérifier elle-même ce qu'elle lui attribue, à savoir que Si 49,10 grec et hébreu (ms. B) mentionne les douze prophètes après Isaïe, Jérémie et Ézéchiël.

Quant aux index, je note beaucoup de fautes dans la bibliographie. Ainsi l'étude de P. Bizzeti (et non Bizetti) est de 1984. L'article déjà mentionné d'A. Harder a paru dans le recueil édité par celle-ci et par R.F. Regtuit, G.C. Wakker et publié chez Forsten. Les études attribuées à Lindez JV et à Schokel LA sont dues respectivement à Vílchez Línchez J. et à Alonso Schökel L. Les accents manquent dans les indications françaises et espagnoles. Enfin l'index des auteurs a été établi à partir d'un manuscrit ou d'épreuves qui devaient contenir 250 ou 251 pages, alors que le livre n'en contient que 245. Beau casse-tête pour qui veut vérifier!

Il n'empêche que ce livre est remarquable à bien des égards et l'on peut espérer que, grâce à la perspicacité de M.M., beaucoup de lecteurs découvriront et apprécieront Sg à sa juste valeur.

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Francis I. ANDERSEN, *Habakkuk. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 25). New York, Doubleday, 2001. xxii-387 p. 16 × 24. \$45.00 – Can\$65.95

Like the book of Habakkuk itself, described in the introduction as “an intensely personal testament”, this latest in the prestigious Anchor Bible commentary series is one in which we can hear the individual voice of the author almost as much as that of the prophet himself. Those who know Frank Andersen will not be surprised to learn, for example, that cultic interpretations

of the book, together with form-criticism in general, are firmly rejected at the start. We recognise his voice too in the recurring optimism about the authenticity of the whole book, including Chapter 3, and in the reluctance to accept any emendations to the masoretic text. The use of *thou* and *thee* in his translation is another example, as is his deliberate rejection of inclusive language on the grounds that it is not “authentic”. We can also recognise on every page of this most scholarly work, his mastery of the Hebrew language, particularly syntax and stylistics, and his meticulous efforts to “bring back to life the culture and values of an ancient society... to understand what (the author of this little book) was doing, what he was feeling, when he wrote it... (and) to relive Habakkuk’s agony”. He concludes the introduction with a rhetorical question: “Is it possible that he still has a message for us in our time?”.

The volume follows the structure of other volumes in the series. It begins with the translation, and then, after the bibliography and introduction, the commentary itself proceeds in sections under the headings Introduction, Notes and (in some cases) Comment or COMMENT (on 1,2–2,6a and chapter 3). There are four indices: Authors, Subjects, Biblical and Other Ancient Sources, and Languages. Andersen insists that a “new sensitivity to Hebrew poetic art” is needed, and there is a valuable excursus on the language of Hebrew poetry as the introduction to the first poem (98-106). Every section of the Hebrew text is first “scanned” and then the introduction to each section is primarily concerned with its poetic structures, isolating tricola and identifying instances of inclusio, chiasmus and the like. The translation then seeks to convey as accurately as possible, not only the meaning of the Hebrew text, but also its poetic structure. The text is printed in short lines (up to six per one masoretic verse), so that parallelism, chiasmus, refrains and other features can readily be identified. Much thought is also given to the overarching literary structure of the book as a whole, as well as its thematic unity: apart from the titles (1,1; 3,1) and the “dedication” (3,19c), the book divides into “Prayers” and “Responses” (1,2–2,5), the five Woe Oracles (2,6-20), and the Psalm (3,1-19b), concluding with a final “Response” (3,16-19).

On every page the reader is given clear guidance to the meaning of the Hebrew, with the one exception of *mgmt* in 1,9, which defeated Wellhausen as well and appears untranslated in Andersen’s English version. Again poetic structure is brilliantly used in the semantic argumentation, as is Andersen’s judicious comparison with Atra Hasis, Enuma Elish and other Akkadian parallels as well as other parts of the Hebrew Bible, especially Isaiah, Jeremiah and Psalms. There is an excursus on the grammatical gender of *ruah*, which is masculine in Hab 1,11 (and 53 other passages in the Hebrew Bible) (160-165), and authoritative discussions of several other purple passages including 2,2-5 (“Write down the vision...”) and 3,3-7 (“The March in the South”).

I would only like to make one general criticism, which applies to the series as a whole as much as to this particular volume. Of the over sixty commentaries on Habakkuk listed in the bibliography all but a handful are 20th century works, and the same goes for the almost 50 pages of general bibliography. Jerome is cited twice, including his view that Habakkuk’s name commemorates an embrace (Hebrew *habaq*) between the prophet and God

(89). There are a few references to the New Testament, notably Paul's use of 2,4 in Rom 1,17 and Gal 3,11, though this is not allowed to deflect attention from the original Hebrew rendered: "the righteous person by its (sc. the vision's) trustworthiness will survive". Several rabbinic traditions are also referred to including the one about Habakkuk's association with Honi the Circle-drawer (192). On the other hand, the Dead Sea Scrolls (particularly Peshier Habakkuk), and the ancient versions (particularly the Septuagint), are very much in evidence throughout: indeed the author gives quite a bit of space to variant readings uniquely attested in the Barberini version. In other words the views of the Qumran exegetes and the Septuagint translators are given pride of place, but almost no account is taken of the views of anyone else in the long history of the text's reception down to the modern period. Ancient and mediaeval Jewish linguists and biblical interpreters, as well as Christian writers, preachers and artists in every age, grappled with the same text and occasionally discovered insights into its meaning just as valuable as those enshrined in the LXX. Such insights may indeed be even more valuable than those of ancient versions, when we consider the fact that the text we mostly use is preserved only in a mediaeval manuscript. Why should modern commentaries not listen to some of the other voices that have spoken on the biblical text, for example, Augustine, Nicholas of Lyra, Rashi, Luther, Matthew Poole, Grotius, Michaelis, John Wesley?

Closely related to this suspicion of "late" or post-biblical material, is the author's apparent reluctance to draw on the vast resources of rabbinic, mediaeval and modern Hebrew. An example appears in his discussion of the word *lanesah*, in which he cites a Northwest Semitic root **nsh* "to be victorious" but makes no reference to the Hebrew word *nissahon* "victory", not attested in Biblical Hebrew but common in all varieties of post-biblical Hebrew (119-120). Not that this is unusual in modern Biblical research as can be seen by the decision of the Sheffield editors to give no space at all to the post-biblical language in the otherwise superb *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. But at the risk of labouring the point, the value of the post-biblical data, historically and semantically far closer to Masoretic Hebrew than Ugaritic or Akkadian or any other language, can hardly be over-emphasized. In the search for the meaning of obscure or rare words, as well as for nuances and associations present in quite common words, Eliezer Ben Yehuda's *Thesaurus totius hebraicitatis* takes a lot of beating.

At the risk of further gilding the lily, I would like to make two further suggestions on particular texts. First, in support of his argument for the image of "a prophet who runs" in 2,2 ("so that he who reads it can run"), Andersen could have referred to Isa 52,7 ("how beautiful are the feet...!") and even more appositely to Habakkuk's own last words: "he makes my feet like the feet of a deer..." (3,19). The second concerns the theophany in 3,3-15. The proposal to identify the "imagery of sunrise" in these verses (298) would be greatly strengthened by an astronomical interpretation of Deber and Resheph. The sudden switch to plagues after verses 3 and 4 is abrupt (cf. vv. 10-11) and Resheph is sometimes identified, like Nergal, with the planet Mars (cf. D. Pardee – N. Swerdlow, "Not the Earliest Eclipse", *Nature* 363 [1992] 406). It would be tempting to find in the parallel Deber a reference to a planet or star (Aldebaran?) as Yahweh's other astral companion.

The special contribution of this substantial volume to our understanding of the little book of Habakkuk, as noted above, is its emphasis on poetic structure, not only as an important subject in its own right, but as a key to the meaning of the Hebrew. There will be more to say no doubt on many of the detailed semantic and syntactic issues so thoroughly and authoritatively investigated, but it would be hard to envisage a more reliable base from which future Habakkuk studies can be launched.

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Novum Testamentum

Wolfgang SCHRAGE, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (1Kor 15,1–16,24) (Evangelisch- Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament VII/4). Benziger Verlag – Neukirchener Verlag, Düsseldorf – Neukirchen 2001. 484 p. 16 × 24. DM 149.

La quatrième et dernière livraison du commentaire de W. Schrage sur 1 Co est encore plus volumineuse que les précédentes: sur les 484 pages, 421 sont consacrées au seul 1 Co 15, et s'il est vrai que ce chapitre est le plus long de la lettre, le commentaire est lui aussi nettement plus long que celui des précédents chapitres; voilà pourquoi, laissant de côté les analyses concernant 1 Co 16, la finale épistolaire (422-484), cette recension en restera à l'exégèse de 1 Co 15.

À dire vrai, si l'exégèse technique a la part belle (environ 230 pages), elle est accompagnée, comme dans les précédents volumes, d'une histoire de l'interprétation des différents passages, où il nous est dit pourquoi certaines affirmations ont été au cours des âges (des Pères à aujourd'hui) mises en valeur plus que d'autres et donné lieu à des débats souvent passionnés. Plutôt que de mettre cette histoire des effets du texte au terme de son exégèse de 1 Co 15, Schrage préfère, comme dans les volumes I–III, la placer à la fin des différentes sections de 1 Co 15, en un traitement qui est loin d'être simpliste, puisque sa longueur avoisine les 190 pages. Sans entrer dans les détails, disons seulement ici à la fois notre intérêt et notre réserve. Intérêt, car la *Wirkungsgeschichte* permet de voir quels vocables ou passages ont été plus discutés, si leur interprétation n'a pas fondamentalement changé ou au contraire, si d'une période à une autre et à l'intérieur même d'une même période, des divergences ont existé. Les exégètes du Nouveau Testament semblent d'ailleurs aujourd'hui donner plus d'attention à l'interprétation des premiers pères grecs. Cela dit, la réserve reste encore de rigueur, car, à la différence de l'exégèse scientifique qu'il pratique lui-même, Schrage ne nous transporte pas vraiment dans l'histoire de l'interprétation, il se contente de mentionner et d'enfiler des prises de position: sans minimiser le colossal

travail de consultation effectué, disons que la description et l'information l'emportent sur la réflexion concernant les représentations socio-religieuses des diverses époques et sur les circonstances historiques et autres ayant souvent fortement déterminé les interprétations rapportées. Cette limite fait regretter l'absence de monographies savantes sur l'histoire de l'exégèse des différents textes bibliques, un type de recherche qui ne fait d'ailleurs que commencer...

Nous pouvons ainsi passer à l'exégèse de 1 Co 15, en commençant par la composition. Comme la plupart de ses prédécesseurs, Schrage divise 1 Co 15 en trois grandes unités (1) les vv. 1-11 où Paul insiste sur les témoins de la résurrection; (2) les vv. 12-34 (formés trois sous-unités: vv. 12-19; 20-28 et 29-34), où l'apôtre montre le lien nécessaire existant entre la résurrection de Jésus et celle des morts à la fin des temps, au point que nier l'une équivaut à nier l'autre; (3) les vv. 35-58 (formés de deux sous unités: vv. 35-49 et 50-58) où l'apôtre explique le type de corporéité qui sera celui des ressuscités. Si l'on voit aisément les difficultés auxquelles répondent les argumentations (2) et (3), grâce aux vv. 12 et 35, il est en revanche plus difficile de déterminer la fonction des vv. 1-11, qui méritent pourtant le nom de *narratio*. Le passage insiste manifestement sur le nombre des témoins de la résurrection de Jésus. Mais à quelle fin? Selon Schrage, c'est moins pour assurer l'autorité ou le statut des témoins que pour poser le fondement christologique de la résurrection des morts (72). En d'autres termes, la *narratio* prépare indirectement les parties (2) et (3). Mais la fin du v. 11 est ambiguë: l'aoriste ἐπιστεύσατε est-il ingressif («vous avez commencé à croire», sous-entendu: «lorsque je vous ai annoncé la mort-résurrection du Christ»), ou signifie-t-il que les Corinthiens ne croient plus en cette résurrection-là? Il me semble avoir compris que, pour Schrage, ce second sens est plus probable. Mais plusieurs raisons invitent à interpréter autrement les données: (a) d'abord le fait qu'à aucun moment Paul n'accuse les Corinthiens de *ne plus* croire en la résurrection du Christ; il déclare même le contraire au v. 1, où l'on a justement un parfait désignant une action dont les effets se prolongent jusque dans le présent (l'Évangile «dans lequel vous avez persévéré», ἐστήκατε); (b) le début de la première argumentation (vv. 12-19) ne pourrait avoir cette forme si les Corinthiens ne croyaient plus en la résurrection du Christ: les clauses en «si... alors» supposent en effet admise cette dernière, sinon le passage devient tout simplement absurde; (c) ce que l'apôtre reproche à ceux qui nient la résurrection des morts, c'est en réalité de ne pas voir que celle du Christ n'est pas un fait isolé, un privilège unique, un *una tantum*, mais qu'elle prépare l'autre et a une valeur salvifique universelle. En montrant l'importance christologique de la *narratio* (vv. 1-11), Schrage va néanmoins à l'essentiel, car tout l'effort de Paul en 1 Co 15 est de montrer l'importance décisive de la résurrection du Christ pour tout discours sur la résurrection finale des morts: christologie et eschatologie sont pour lui inséparables.

Schrage s'interroge aussi sur l'identité de ceux qui niaient la résurrection des morts: se satisfaisaient-ils de la seule immortalité de l'âme, étaient-ils plutôt des matérialistes pour qui il n'y a rien après la mort, etc.? Le commentateur examine toutes les réponses fournies par ses prédécesseurs, et il conclut très justement que Paul reste délibérément dans le flou ou formule ses réponses afin qu'elles valent pour toutes les catégories de négateurs de la

résurrection, matérialistes aussi bien que tenants de l'immortalité de l'âme. Derrière les questions du v. 35, ajoute avec raison Schrage, il est difficile de mettre un groupe précis, d'autant plus que la formulation actuelle a toutes les chances d'être paulinienne; de même, les vv. 32-34 n'impliquent pas nécessairement que ceux qui n'iaient la résurrection étaient des hédonistes ou des matérialistes (même s'il y en a parmi eux qui semblent avoir une vie dissolue), car c'est Paul qui tire les conséquences extrêmes d'une non prise en considération de la pertinence du corps pour la vie morale. Soit dit en passant, ce que le commentateur dit sur la difficulté d'identifier ceux que l'apôtre critique et à qui il répond, ne vaut pas que pour 1 Co 15; Paul procède en effet de la même manière en toutes ses argumentations: s'il est impossible de restituer avec certitude la situation des Églises ou d'identifier les adversaires de Paul, c'est parce que ce dernier efface les circonstances exactes et tait l'appartenance à des écoles, à des groupes ou des courants précis; si Paul procède ainsi, c'est qu'il estime qu'on peut comprendre ses lettres sans avoir nécessairement à reconstituer dans le détail la situation qu'il vise ou les idées qu'il combat, et donc que cet arrière-fond n'est pas un préalable indispensable à la compréhension de ses lettres, ce qui semble aller contre l'option méthodologique de ceux pour qui on ne peut comprendre les argumentations de Paul si l'on n'a pas auparavant restitué fidèlement le milieu ecclésial, social et culturel de ses correspondants (cf. B.W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth. The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* [Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge, UK 2001] xiii).

Au v. 19, à propos de l'adverbe μόνον, Schrage préfère suivre l'interprétation commune en vigueur depuis l'Église ancienne, laquelle rattache l'adverbe à un syntagme qui en est pourtant assez éloigné, ἐν τῇ ζωῇ ταύτῃ et traduit: «en cette vie seulement» (134), la conditionnelle viserait alors une espérance chrétienne d'où le *post mortem* serait exclu; en mentionnant pareille attitude, Paul s'opposerait implicitement à la seule théologie de la croix ou, pour le dire autrement, à une théologie de la croix isolée du reste du mystère du Christ. Le commentateur souligne ainsi l'importance de la christologie pour l'eschatologie paulinienne. Sa traduction et son interprétation du verset sont plus que défendables. Des vv. 20-28, il retient trois points centraux (150-231): (1) la résurrection de Jésus est interprétée par l'apôtre comme le point d'arrivée et le gage de l'agir salvifique de Dieu, comme ce qui inaugure les événements de la fin, et donc la résurrection des morts. La résurrection attendue devient ainsi impliquée par la christologie; (2) le temps qui sépare la résurrection de Jésus de la résurrection finale est celui de la seigneurie de Jésus Christ (3), qui est limitée dans le temps et prépare celle de Dieu. Dans les deux premiers points, Schrage rappelle encore le rapport essentiel établi par 1 Co 15 entre christologie et eschatologie. Si les vv. 29-34 ne soulèvent pas de difficulté d'ensemble, dans la mesure ils rappellent seulement ce qui, dans la pratique et l'attitude des croyants, indique une croyance en la résurrection finale (231-266), le v. 29 n'a pourtant pas encore trouvé d'interprétation satisfaisante: Schrage suit avec des «peut-être» la majorité des interprètes: il s'agirait d'un baptême vicair, des croyants se faisant baptiser pour des parents ou amis non baptisés, afin de les faire bénéficier du salut en Christ (239). À propos du v. 32, il nous est signalé que, pour Paul, «si l'on ne croit pas à la résurrection, manque alors la

base de l'éthique» (246): le corps est moralement important, parce que le corps des croyants est sanctifié par l'union au Christ et la présence de l'Esprit et qu'il ressuscitera.

Les vv. 35-58 forment, on l'a déjà vu, la deuxième partie de l'argumentation, sur la nature du corps ressuscité. Les explications fournies par l'apôtre consistent en deux exemples (vv. 36-44) et une preuve scripturaire (vv. 45-49). Avec raison le commentateur refuse de faire des vv. 50-58 une *peroratio* (avec Bünker, Probst et d'autres – si *peroratio* il y a, elle se réduit au v. 58), il y voit plutôt une dernière unité argumentative, qui a pour fonction d'élargir la réflexion, car Paul n'y parle plus seulement des morts, mais de tous les humains, morts ou vivants lors de la parousie, qui devront tous être radicalement transformés à la fin des temps pour entrer dans la gloire (359-421). La disposition du vocabulaire confirme la position de Schrage: qu'il suffise de rappeler la disposition concentrique des vv. 35-58, en A = vv. 36-44a, B = vv. 44b-49 et A' = vv. 50-57, les mêmes mots ou les mêmes racines se trouvant dans les unités A et A' (ἄλλος et ἀλλάσσομαι ἀφθαρσία) (cf. S. Brodeur, *The Holy Spirit's Agency in the Resurrection of the Dead. The Study of 1 Corinthians 15,44b-49 and Romans 8,9-13* [Tesi Gregoriana; Rome 1996] 19-29; J.-B. Matand Bulembat, *Noyaux et enjeux de l'eschatologie paulinienne. De l'apocalyptique juive et de l'eschatologie hellénistique dans quelques argumentations de l'apôtre Paul. Étude rhétorico exégétique de 1 Co 15,35-58; 2 Co 5,1-10 et Rm 8,18-30* [BZNW 84; Berlin - New York 1997] 36).

Les vv. 36-38 sont bien analysés. Cela est vrai, pour Paul, le changement entre grain et plante est dû à un acte créateur de Dieu (il n'est en rien une transformation qui viendrait de la nature elle-même): ce qui advient (la plante) est tout autre que ce qui était auparavant (le grain). La discontinuité et la continuité sont assurées par Dieu. Et le passage (discontinu) de l'un à l'autre, Paul l'appelle *mort*, la continuité étant telle parce que voulue par Dieu – tel grain donnant toujours telle plante (285). Avec raison Schrage dit encore que l'adjectif «nu» (γυμνός) ne désigne pas l'âme séparée du corps (comme chez Platon ou Philon), mais ce corps-ci, mortel (286). Quant à la deuxième image, elle sert à indiquer la différence de corporéité des êtres, les uns célestes et glorieux, les autres terrestres et d'une gloire inférieure. Schrage indique aussi, à propos de l'état glorieux des êtres célestes (soleil, lune, étoiles), combien la réflexion de Paul se présente comme une critique de ceux qui considèrent la dégradation de ce qui est corporel (physique): que des êtres corporels aient une gloire éternelle indique bien que le corporel n'est pas de soi corrompible (293). On regrettera que la raison du passage de la première à la deuxième série d'images ne soit pas explicitée. En effet, la première série *souligne la discontinuité temporelle*, et elle ne pouvait suffire, car si la plante est différente du grain, *elle dépérit, elle aussi*; Paul se devait donc de fournir un exemple de corps dont la gloire est éternelle. Mais à son tour, cette série soulève une difficulté énorme, car on n'a jamais vu un corps terrestre devenir céleste (un chien ou un homme devenir un astre). Si les deux séries d'exemples illustrent donc bien la différence existant entre le corps mortel et le corps ressuscité, elles ne fournissent pas de preuve d'existence (notre corps mortel sera totalement transformé en gloire), et il revient précisément aux vv. 44b-49 de la fournir: le passage d'un corps à l'autre existe, la preuve en est

donnée par le Christ! Revenons au commentaire de Schrage: pour l'argumentation des vv. 35-49 la description ne suffisait donc pas, d'autant plus qu'on ne peut plus aujourd'hui utiliser les images fournies par Paul: tous savent bien qu'il y a *continuité* — et non *discontinuité* — entre le grain et la plante, entre la terre et les astres du ciel! Si le commentaire se contente de présenter minutieusement *ce que dit Paul*, il semble néanmoins percevoir ici et là (298) ce qu'ont d'incomplet les images utilisées par l'apôtre.

À propos de l'argumentation des vv. 45-49, il est très justement noté que Paul ne signale pas que Dieu insuffla vie à l'Adam de Gn 2,7 (302 et 314), et que le fait que Christ soit ressuscité et ait un corps spirituel ne suffit pas pour l'argumentation, car il pourrait n'être qu'une exception. Voilà pourquoi, grâce à la citation de Gn 2,7, Paul développe la relation entre les deux Adam et arrive au rapport qui l'intéresse ici, celui entre la résurrection du Christ et la nôtre. Sont bien relevées les trois oppositions successives entre les deux Adam: (1) au v. 46, selon le rang (cf. vv. 36-38), le premier étant psychique et le deuxième, spirituel; (2) au v. 47, selon l'origine (cf. vv. 39-41), le premier étant terrestre et le deuxième, céleste; (3) au v. 48, selon leur descendance respective (deux types d'humanité). On sait que dans le *Legum allegoriae* I, 31-32 de Philon, le premier homme (céleste) est supérieur au deuxième (terrestre). Schrage se demande si la lecture de Paul se présente comme une réaction à celle de Philon. La réponse est difficile, car en 1 Co15,44-49 il n'y a pas l'ombre d'une polémique (au demeurant, Paul a-t-il même connu les écrits du philosophe juif?). Il est néanmoins clair que le schéma des deux hommes (à partir de Gn 1-2) vient du judaïsme hellénistique. Mais la lecture de Paul (le deuxième Adam est ultime, céleste et parfait) n'a pu se faire qu'à partir de l'expérience qu'il eut de la résurrection du Christ (cf. S. Kim, *The origin of Paul's Gospel* [WUNT 2.4; Tübingen 1981]; *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel* [Grand Rapids, MI 2002]). Sa lecture de Gn est ainsi fondamentalement *christologique*. On revient ainsi à l'idée maîtresse qui court tout au long de ce commentaire, à savoir l'importance de la christologie de Paul — et d'une christologie où la résurrection joue un rôle majeur — pour l'élaboration de son eschatologie.

Excellente étude que celle de W. Schrage, et qui reflète parfaitement la qualité croissante des commentaires actuels. La médaille a évidemment son revers: si tous les chapitres des lettres pauliniennes doivent désormais faire l'objet d'une présentation aussi longue, il va devenir difficile, pour ne pas dire impossible, de maîtriser la bibliographie. Qu'advient-il dans cinq ou six décennies?

Varia

Charles E. CARTER, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period. A Social and Demographic Study* (JSOTSS 294). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 16 × 24. 386 pp.

Die Grundthese des Buches und der vielleicht am häufigsten vorkommende Begriff ist "a small Yehud", d. h. eine an Fläche und Bevölkerung kleine Provinz Juda in der persischen Zeit. Konkret hätte die Provinz Juda nach C. ca. 15.000 Einwohner gehabt und Jerusalem ca. 1.500 (wenn nicht noch weniger, etwa 12.000 bzw. 1.000 bis 1.500), wobei ein Wachstum von der Perserzeit I (PZ I, bis Mitte 5. Jh.) zu Perserzeit II (PZ II, ab Mitte 5. Jh.) zu beobachten ist. Die Untersuchung ist im wesentlichen "a social and demographic study", wie der Untertitel signalisiert. Dagegen bleibt die im Haupttitel genannte Frage nach der Entstehung der Provinz Juda/Yehud offen, auch wenn die verschiedensten Positionen (Verselbstständigung unter Nehemia, Weiterbestehen einer babylonischen Provinz) und die einschlägige Literatur referiert werden.

Das Buch ist der überarbeitete erste Teil einer Dissertation, die bei Eric Meyers an der Duke University, Durham, N.C., erarbeitet und 1991 abgeschlossen wurde. Als updates sind die Berichte in den "Excavations and Surveys in Israel" bis 1996 berücksichtigt (29). Die Arbeit war ursprünglich verbunden mit einer weit ausholenden, die ottomanische und die britische Mandatszeit einschließenden, Untersuchung "on the usefulness of ethnoarchaeological data", die unter dem Titel "Filling the Gaps: Ethnoarchaeology and the Biblical Record" später in JSOTSS erscheinen soll (Leider macht C. keine Andeutungen über seine dort erzielten Ergebnisse, vgl. 197, Anm. 77.78).

In der "Introduction" und in Kap. 1 "The Changing Face of the Persian Period" (31-74) referiert C. Aspekte der Forschungsgeschichte zur Frage der Größe und Entwicklung der Provinz Juda in der Perserzeit. Es mag sein, dass "Yehud has rarely been the subject of full-length works" (33), die Fußnoten (33-35) ebenso wie die Bibliographie (350-372) zeigen aber, dass zum Thema nicht wenig geforscht und geschrieben wurde. Allerdings ist in der Tat das Interesse an der persischen Zeit in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten erheblich gestiegen.

C. erörtert die meist auf Textinterpretation bezogenen Forschungen, er selbst ist aber, so wie die Gewährsleute, denen er am meisten zuneigt (C.C. Torrey [39]; L. Grabbe [41]; P.R. Davis [44]; R.P. Carroll [42.46]) sehr skeptisch gegenüber den "traditions" der Bücher Esra und Nehemia. Umso wichtiger ist das Referat von K. Hoglund (*Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Mission of Ezra and Nehemiah* [JSOTSS 117; Sheffield 1992]), der verschiedene Dimensionen berücksichtigt, nämlich neben den biblischen Texten und archäologischen Befunden auch die politische Gesamtsituation Judas sowie soziologische Interpretationsmodelle (42-52). Nicht zuletzt stellt Hoglund die militärische Bedeutung Palästinas nach der Befreiung Ägyptens durch den Aufstand des Inaras heraus, der ab

der Mitte des 5. Jh.s zu einer zunehmenden Militarisierung Judas führte (44). Das Referat zu J.P. Weinberg und dessen "Bürger-Tempel-Gemeinde-Modell" (verschiedene Beiträge seit 1972, siehe jetzt: *The Citizen-Temple Community* [JSOTSS 151; Sheffield 1992]) wirkt dagegen hier (44-48) ebenso nachgetragen wie im Zusammenhang der "Synthesis" (294-299), was für eine Arbeit mit dem hier erhobenen Anspruch doch verwundert.

Die Frage des "Status of Yehud within the Persian Empire" wird nur kurz angesprochen (50-52) und spielt auch weiterhin in der Untersuchung kaum eine Rolle. C. folgt im Prinzip M. Kochmans (*Status and Extent of Judah in the Persian Period* [Diss. PhD; Jerusalem 1980]) Meinung, dass Juda ab der babylonischen Zeit(!) eine eigene Provinz war, und verweist dazu auf seine Lehrer E. und C. Meyers, die das "governor-gap" durch Namen aus perserzeitlichen Siegelabdrücken (Bullae) aus den Wadi-ed-Daliye-Papyri auffüllen (52). Allerdings hängt die Rekonstruktion dieser (unvollständigen?) Gouverneursliste an durchaus umstrittenen Datierungen und daran, dass der Titel *peḥa* nur einen Provinzgouverneur und nicht auch andere Funktionsträger bezeichnen kann.

Das Referat zu "Social Sciences and Contextual Archaeology" (60-70) beginnt mit der arabischen Soziologie bei Ibn Khaldun und führt über R. Smith, M. Weber, E. Durkheim, A. Causse, G. Mendenhall, N. Gottwald, W.M.F. Albright, G.E. Wright, W. Dever u.a. zu C. und E. Meyers, sowie von der "New Archaeology" zu Devers "Newest Archaeology" und zur "Contextual Archaeology". Bei diesem Ansatz, dem sich C. verpflichtet weiß, geht es darum, alle Faktoren (vgl. 72 Anm. 155) und Erkenntnismöglichkeiten (Beachtung geschichtlicher Zusammenhänge, sozialgeschichtlicher Analogien und auch wieder der biblischen Texte) zu berücksichtigen (73-74). Diese Überlegungen sind einerseits eine Binsenweisheit, andererseits zeigt sich die Schwierigkeit bei der Analyse des jeweiligen Materials und bei der Korrelation der einzelnen Ergebnisse (s.u.).

Die Bestimmung des Umfangs der Provinz Juda in der persischen Zeit (Kap. 2, "The Boundaries of Yehud", 75-114) bleibt in traditionellen Bahnen. In der Tat ist es so, dass archäologische Funde, wie etwa der Fund eines Yehud-Siegels in Arad noch nichts über Zugehörigkeit zur Provinz Juda sagen. Arad liegt so weit im Süden und ist so weit von Jerusalem entfernt, dass es so gut wie sicher nicht zur Provinz Juda gehörte. Das Yehud-Siegel von Arad stammt demzufolge wahrscheinlich von einem Händler oder einem Reisenden. Ebenso sind auch die Ortsnamenslisten von Esra und Nehemia (Esr 2; Neh 3.7.11; 77-81) nicht unmittelbar für die Größe der Provinz Juda auszuwerten. Die Listen sprechen von jüdischen Rückkehrern. Diese können auch in Orte zurückgekehrt sein, die zu einer anderen Provinz gehörten. Die Nord- und Ostgrenze der Provinz Juda sind unstrittig. Im Osten wird sie bis zum Jordan und zum Toten Meer gegangen sein, d.h. Jericho eingeschlossen haben. Im Norden wird sie ungefähr der alten Grenze zwischen Nordreich und Südreich bzw. den assyrischen und babylonischen Provinzen Samaria und Jerusalem verlaufen sein. Für die Westgrenze ist es wahrscheinlich, dass sich die Provinz bis zum Westrand des Hügellandes erstreckte, dass die Schephela jedoch zu den Städten der Küstenebene gehörte (93-94 mit Verweis auf Hoglund). Im Unterschied zu vielen anderen Autoren (u.a. Hoglund) rechnet C. im Süden jedoch Hebron zur Provinz Juda: "Here I am

consciously departing from the conventional view that the area south of Beth-Zur and north of Hebron was under Edomite control in the Persian Period" (98-99; die nächste Ortslage mit nachgewiesener edomitischer Präsenz ist Horvat Qitmit im östlichen Negev). C. verweist im Anschluss an Hoglund darauf, daß die übliche Zuordnung Hebrons zu Edom auf 1 Makk 4–5 basiert (99). C. mag hier teilweise im Recht sein. Zwar sprechen neugefundene edomitisch-aramäische Texte aus der Umgebung von Hebron für eine Zugehörigkeit zu den Edomitern (vgl. A. Lemaire, "Der Beitrag idumäischer Ostraka zur Geschichte Palästinas im Übergang von der persischen zur hellenistischen Zeit", *ZAW* 115 [1999] 12-23 und ders., "L'économie de l'Idumée d'après les nouveaux ostraca araméens", *Transeuphratène* 19 [2000] 131-143), da diese Texte jedoch erst aus der Zeit von ca. 363 bis 313 v.Chr. (Lemaire, "Beitrag", 20) stammen, ist nicht auszuschließen, daß die Grenze zwischen Juda und Idumäa im Lauf der persischen Zeit verändert wurde. Diese Veränderung könnte mit der offensichtlichen Verlagerung des Ortes in der Perserzeit Hand in Hand gegangen sein (vgl. A. Ofer, "Hebron", *NEAEHL* 2, 606-609).

Der Hauptteil des Buches und der vielleicht nützlichste sind die Kap. "3. Excavated Sites" (114-171) und "4. Surveys, Site Distribution and Population" (172-212). Hier hat C. alle vorhandenen Informationen zusammengestellt und ausgewertet. Wer sich für einzelne Ortslagen oder die Ausgrabungsberichte interessiert, ist bestens bedient und hat zudem alle einschlägige Literatur verzeichnet (s. auch 325-349). Insgesamt kommt C. auf eine ausgegrabene Siedlungsfläche von 93,5 Dunam (1 Dunam = 1000 m²), und eine bei Surveys entdeckte Siedlungsfläche von 400,5 Dunam, der er einen "Korrekturfaktor" von 10% bzw. 40 Dunam für nicht entdeckte Siedlungen hinzurechnet. Das ergibt eine Siedlungsfläche von 534 Dunam für die Persische Zeit I. Die entsprechenden Angaben für Persische Zeit II sind 141 + 591 + 94 = 826 Dunam. Dies bestätigt die bisherige Annahme eines Bevölkerungszuwachses von PZ I zu PZ II um ca. 50% (201). Demgegenüber nimmt C. an, dass Jerusalem nach der Errichtung des Tempels, d.h. vor 500 v.Chr., bereits seine volle Größe erreicht hatte und in PZ II nicht weiter wuchs.

Der eigentlich interessante Punkt sind nun die Bevölkerungszahlen: C. referiert Arbeiten von M. Broshi, R. Gophna, Y. Shiloh und I. Finkelstein, die sich allerdings auch auf wesentlich frühere (Frühe Bronzezeit, Eisenzeit I), oder spätere Phasen (römisch-byzantinische Zeit) beziehen (195-199). Während Broshi für die nachexilische Zeit 4500 Einwohner für Jerusalem angenommen hatte (201, Anm. 89), kommt C. auf nur 1500. Dies kommt daher, dass C. etwa die Hälfte der Fläche Jerusalems für öffentliche Bauten und damit ohne Bewohner ansetzt, und dass er andererseits generell von einer geringeren Bevölkerungsdichte ausgeht. Während Broshi von 150 Einwohnern pro acre bzw. 37,5 Bewohnern pro Dunam ausging, rechnet C. mit 25 Personen pro Dunam. Mit diesem Faktor und den oben erwähnten Flächenzahlen kommt C. auf 13.350 Einwohner der Provinz Juda in der PZ I und 20.650 Einwohner in der PZ II (201).

Diese Annahme mag richtig sein, sie bleibt aber doch willkürlich. M.a.W.: C. kommt bei der geographischen Ausdehnung der Provinz Juda zu einem in etwa durchschnittlichen traditionellen Ergebnis, während sein

Begriff eines “small Yehud” sich allein auf die relativ niedrige angenommene Bevölkerungszahl bezieht.

Nun ist es in der Tat schwierig, Bevölkerungszahlen abzuschätzen, und die Annahmen in der Forschung divergieren dementsprechend. Die Annahme von 25 Einwohnern auf 1000 m² bedeutet, dass einer Person 40 m² zur Verfügung standen. Für eine 5 bis 6-köpfige Familie ergäbe das 200 bis 240 m², für eine größere, 10-köpfige Familie (z.B. Großeltern, Eltern, vier Kinder und ein Knecht und eine Magd, oder alternativ unverheiratete Geschwister des Vaters) ergäbe das eine Fläche von 400 m², und zwar nicht im freien Gelände, sondern innerhalb der Ortschaft. Zwar sind bei dieser Rechnung nicht nur der reine Wohnraum, sondern auch Hof und Stall und anteilige Straßenflächen mit zu berücksichtigen, es ist aber doch die Frage, ob nicht ein altisraelitisches Dorf wesentlich beengter war. Insofern ist die von C. angenommene Bevölkerungsdichte nicht ganz neu, aber sie liegt an der unteren Grenze des Vorstellbaren und auch des in der Literatur Vertretenen (vgl. die 197-198 erwähnten Autoren). M.E. ist eine höhere Bevölkerungsdichte anzunehmen, zumindest etwa im Bereich der Annahme von Broshi (ca. 30 m² pro Person). Problematisch erscheint auch, dass C. überall den gleichen Faktor annimmt. In der Tat wird man für Jerusalem einen erheblichen Teil öffentlicher Flächen annehmen müssen. Andererseits aber auch, dass die Bevölkerungsdichte in den Wohnbereichen der Stadt erheblich größer war, als in einer Ortschaft auf dem freien Land. Insofern ist die Rechnung von Broshi, der für Jerusalem bei der Durchschnittszahl bleibt, aber dafür mit der Gesamtfläche rechnet, überzeugender.

In den weiteren Teilen des Buches finden sich umfangreiche statistische Analysen der verschiedenen Befunde (Anzahl der kleineren Siedlungen, Anzahl der größeren Siedlungen, Verteilung auf die verschiedenen “Environmental Niches” u. ä. [222.224]) und nicht zuletzt ein Vergleich mit Schätzungen zur Eisen II-Zeit von Finkelstein bzw. Broshi und Ofer sowie mit den Ausführungen von Hoglund. (Die um das Zehnfache höher, nämlich bei 200.000 Einwohnern gelegene Schätzung von J.P. Weinberg [298-299] erscheint dagegen in der Tat wesentlich zu hoch). Schließlich werden in der abschließenden “Synthesis” (249-324) viele Fakten nochmals ausgebreitet und viele Diskussionen nochmals referiert. Darüber hinaus werden zusätzliche Probleme eingebracht, wie die oben erwähnte ausführliche Auseinandersetzung mit Weinbergs “Bürger-Tempel-Gemeinde-Modell” und Einzelheiten wie die Diskussion verschiedener Münzfunde.

Entgegen der de facto ausschließlichen Konzentration auf Siedlungsfläche und Einwohnerdichte versucht C. am Schluß im Sinn des eingangs erwähnten Konzepts von “Contextual Archaeology” nun seinerseits die Linien in verschiedenste Bereiche auszuziehen. So fragt er, wie dieses relativ kleine Juda den großen Tempelbetrieb finanzieren konnte. C. denkt an staatlich-persische Unterstützung sowie an Beiträge von Juden, die außerhalb der Provinz lebten. In ähnlicher Weise stellt er die Frage nach dem “Literary Genius in the Post-Exilic Period” (286) bzw. “could a small Jerusalem support this level of literary production?” (287). Die Überlegungen bleiben – notgedrungen – vage und die Antworten apodiktisch: Das Alte Testament spricht von Aaroniden, Zadokiten und Levitischen Priestern sowie von Sängern und Tempeldienern und Torhütern und einer “scribal class” (Esr

8,1.9). Der Provinzgouverneur hatte zudem wahrscheinlich Verwaltungspersonal und eine Wachmannschaft. Jerusalem hatte in der PZ II zwischen 1250 und 1500 Einwohner, d.h. zwischen 6 und 7,3% der Bevölkerung der Provinz. Diese Zahlen liegen innerhalb der üblichen 5 bis 10% Stadtbevölkerung in vorindustriellen Gesellschaften und sind somit ausreichend (287-288). Aus dieser bloß relativen (!) Zahl folgert C.: "Thus, based on historical and sociological parallels cited here, the level of literary creativity traditionally attributed to the Persian period need not to be questioned on the grounds either of a small province or a small Jerusalem" (288). Hier kann man nur fragen, welche Behauptung C. aufgestellt hätte, wenn wir nicht die Beweise dieser "literary creativity" in Form der alttestamentlichen Literatur vor uns hätten. Ähnlich fragwürdig ist die Verbindung von Einwohnerzahl und apokalyptischer Literatur. Kann eine relativ kleine Einwohnerzahl von Juda bzw. Jerusalem wirklich "in turn explain the relatively minimal messianic expectations of the early Persian period and would suggest that little if any hope for independence existed at that time" (294)? Ist apokalyptische Hoffnung auf das Eingreifen Gottes und auf eine völlige Umgestaltung der Welt abhängig von der militärischen Stärke? Hätten ein paar hundert Soldaten mehr oder 3.000 statt 1.500 Einwohner Jerusalems eine Hoffnung auf Unabhängigkeit vom Persischen Weltreich begründen können? Andererseits: Geht es nicht bei Sacharja und Serubbabel um erhebliche messianische Erwartungen in "the early Persian period"? So sinnvoll es ist, alle Lebensbereiche zu berücksichtigen und alle Daten auszuwerten, so wenig hilft ein methodisch unreflektierter Rundumschlag.

Der wichtigste Beitrag der Arbeit von C. ist die Zusammenstellung des archäologischen Materials, das für die Provinz Juda in der Persischen Zeit in Frage kommt. Die Auswertung des Materials folgt einer klaren These, nämlich der These eines "small Yehud". Die letztlich entscheidenden Faktoren sind die angenommene Bevölkerungsdichte von 25 Personen pro Dunam nachgewiesener Siedlungsfläche sowie die Voraussetzung, dass es nur Bevölkerung gab, die archäologisch nachgewiesene Siedlungsspuren hinterließ. Wie problematisch diese Annahme ist, kann man ahnen, wenn man sich z. B. die Spannung zwischen dem archäologischen Befund für Samaria "very few remains have survived from the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian periods" (N. Avigad, "Samaria (City)", *NEAEHL* 4, 1306) und den Worten des assyrischen Königs Sargon II "Samaria machte ich indes größer als zuvor, und Bewohner von Ländern, die meine Hand erobert hatte, ließ ich darin einziehen" (TGI, Nr. 30 = TUAT I, 382) vor Augen hält.

Ein Problem der Arbeit ist ihr Ergänzungscharakter. Wichtige Beiträge aus der Forschung, und damit wichtige Faktoren für die Sache wurden offensichtlich erst sukzessive in die Arbeit ein- bzw. an die einzelnen Kapitel angefügt. Das macht nicht nur die Lektüre unübersichtlich, sondern beeinträchtigt auch die Relevanz der Argumentation. Zu den offensichtlich nachgetragenen und nur am Rande bedachten Problemen gehört nicht zuletzt ein für die persische Provinz Juda wesentliches, nämlich die Frage nach der Rolle der Perser in der Provinz Juda und nach der Rolle Judas im Persischen Reich an der Grenze zu Ägypten (diese Frage kommt fast nur über das Referat von Hoglund in den Blick). Trotz der Probleme wird die Arbeit die Forschung

weiterführen durch das dargebotene Material und durch die Antworten, die sie provoziert.

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Peter Ross BEDFORD, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 65). Leiden, Brill, 2001. xii-369 p. 16,5 × 24,5. Dfl 220,37 – \$123

The building of a new temple on the ruins of the one destroyed in 586, in the sixth year of Darius I, was a defining moment in the history of post-destruction Judaeon communities, but it was by no means inevitable. As long as the Judaeon monarchy lasted, the Jerusalem temple was an institution at the service of the state and state policies and, in that capacity, it provided religious legitimization for the anti-Babylonian revolts; hence its destruction by the Babylonians as a deliberate, ideological act in August 586 and the execution of its chief functionaries. As long as the Babylonian empire lasted, there was no likelihood that the temple of that “rebellious city hurtful to kings and provinces” (Ezra 4,15) would be restored. And once Judah became a small subdivision of the Persian Achaemenid empire, any attempt to replace the Solomonic temple would have to be justified on the basis of different assumptions and a different ideology, and in the expectation of its playing a religious and social role in the life of the nation adapted to the radically changed situation.

This issue of temple ideology is addressed by Peter R. Bedford in a revised and expanded version of a Chicago dissertation written under the guidance of the late Prof. G.W. Ahlström. In working out his own answer to the question about the rationale for the rebuilding of the temple, and why it was rebuilt during the reign of Darius I rather than two decades earlier, Bedford disagrees vigorously with several current scholarly assumptions. He rejects the view that the project of replacing Solomon’s temple arose out of a situation of conflict, in particular between the Judaeo-Babylonian element (the *bēnē haggôlâ*) and the “natives”. On the contrary, he maintains, the temple was intended as an emblem of social integration and unity, and both parties had a role in the project. Bedford also disagrees with the assumption that the rebuilt temple resembled the many other temples throughout the empire which possessed their own domains and served as administrative and economic as well as a religious centres, and he takes issue with the much-discussed, but now somewhat out-of-favour *Bürger-Tempel-Gemeinde* thesis of Joel Weinberg. As he sees it, the project was neither set in motion nor financed by the imperial authorities in Susa. Ezra 1,1–4,5, which emphasizes imperial benevolence in this respect, is a late and tendentious source, and the evidence for Persian support for local cults throughout their empire is far from unambiguous. Relying principally on

Haggai, whom he regards as a native Judean, Bedford sees the arrival in the province of Zerubbabel, scion of the royal Davidic house, and therefore a legitimate temple-builder, as providing the impetus for temple building at that time, the early years of the reign of Darius. The project was intended to serve, and actually served, as a means towards social integration, and as symbolizing the re-establishment of the rule of Yahweh over his people, though now without a human vicegerent in the person of the Davidic monarch.

Bedford is right to raise serious questions about the historical reliability of Ezra 1,1–4,5, but is perhaps too hasty in dismissing out of hand its account of the province in the early years of Iranian rule. A source can be late and tendentious and yet convey some information of historical value. The same could be said about the narrative framework of Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 on which Bedford places much more credence. The return en masse of some 50,000 Judaeo-Babylonians can hardly be correct, and the representation of these immigrants as forming a distinct cult community is no doubt exaggerated for ideological reasons. But biblical sources for the early Achaemenid period other than Ezra 1,1–4,5 testify to a community deeply divided along several fault lines, a community with social and economic inequalities (Isa 58–59), and in which disputes over land tenure between those actually in possession and immigrants were endemic (Ez 11,15; 33,23–24). Whatever the status of the province vis-à-vis Samaria, there is nothing improbable about the Samarian leadership either attempting to move in on the project of temple-building or opposing it outright (Ezra 4,1–24). The *political* motivation for this opposition from Judah's northern neighbour would emerge more clearly with the struggle between Sanballat and Nehemiah. If, moreover, an alternative sanctuary had been set up after the Babylonian conquest in connection with the administrative centre at Mizpah, perhaps at Bethel which continued as a cult centre after the Assyrian conquest (2 Kgs 17,24–28), the potential for conflict with the advocates of a restored Jerusalemite temple, including the priest Joshua, a Zadokite to judge by his patronymic, would have been greatly increased.

Together with T. Willi ("Levitens, Priester und Kult in vorhellenistischer Zeit. Die chronistische Optik in ihrem geschichtlichen Kontext", *Gemeinde ohne Tempel/Community without Temple* [Hrsg. Beate Ego] [Tübingen 1999] 75–96), Bedford is very properly opposed to assigning too much political importance to the priesthood in the early Achaemenid period. The province, *yehûd medîntâ*, was under a governor, a layman, and there are plenty of indications in the Nehemiah narrative of the governor's coercive power over the cult and cult functionaries (Neh 5,12; 9,38; 10,28; 11,10–14; 12,44–47; 13,4–13,28–31). But it is nonetheless clear, in Judah no less than in the Greek city-states, that participation in and support of the temple cult was a matter of political as well as religious importance. Moreover, the political status of the temple under Persian rule is illustrated by a small but significant point that seems to have escaped Bedford's attention: the insistence that prayers for the royal family be incorporated in the temple liturgy (Ezra 6,10, cf. 7,23). This may be taken to indicate that the Persian monarch has replaced the native dynast, and that therefore the temple is henceforth to serve the interests and further the agenda of the imperial authorities.

Though it was entirely normal for cult centres in the Achaemenid empire

to possess their own estates, Bedford is convinced that the Jerusalem temple was an exception. It is true that the biblical sources for this time are not explicit on the subject, as are our sources for the Graeco-Roman period, but in this instance appearances may be deceptive. In the account of Ezra's marriage "reforms" (Ezra 9–10), absentees from the assembly convened to resolve the issue were threatened with expulsion from the *qāhāl* and sequestration of property (Ezra 10,8). The term *rēkūš* can refer to property in general including animals, but also immovable property, real estate, as in 1 Chr 27,25–31, where *rēkūš* is distinguished from *miqneh*, livestock, and includes arable and pasture land, vineyards, olive and sycamore groves. In Ezra 10,8 the property becomes *h̄rm*, that is, dedicated to the temple, in keeping with the detailed prescriptions governing deeding of property, including land, to the temple in Lev 27,14–29. Most scholars would take this to refer to actual practice in the Second Temple period. The point is made explicitly in the parallel 1 Esdras 9,4 according to which the property would be seized for the use of the temple (*anierōthēsontai*).

Lack of direct, contemporary documentation for Persian imperial policy with respect to the Judaeon cult centre seriously inhibits the confident use of case histories in other parts of the empire. The parallel issue of imperial authorization of the laws, alluded to in passing by Bedford (199–201), is beset by the same problem. But given the poverty of our knowledge, we should not rule them completely out of consideration as potential source material, in which respect Bedford rejects the comparativist approach rather too apodictically. In the final analysis, we are at the mercy of our sources which are not only few and far between but also for the most part uncooperative. Given this limitation, Bedford has performed a valuable service in subjecting to rigorous scrutiny and criticism some widely accepted conclusions about the early Achaemenid period. He has set out his position clearly and forcibly and he has read practically everything. Whatever their opinion on these issues – Judean parties and politics, the impact of the imperial power, the status and function of the Jerusalem temple – scholars interested in the Second Temple will profit by his contribution whether they agree with his arguments or not.

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Peter S. WILLIAMSON, *Catholic Principles for Interpreting Scripture*. A Study of the Pontifical Biblical Commission's *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (Subsidia Biblica 22). Preface by Albert Vanhoye, S.J. Rome, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2001. xxii–400 p. 17 × 24. €25,82 – \$28.00.

The aim of this book, prepared as a doctoral dissertation at the Gregorian University in Rome, is to identify the key principles that should govern Catholic biblical interpretation as they are set forth explicitly or implicitly in the 1993 document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation*

of the Bible in the Church. What prompted the study of this document was the author's impression that "professional biblical scholarship had lost sight of its religious character, or ... had forgotten to relate the Bible to life" (7). The book succeeds well not only in identifying twenty such principles, but also in discussing the meaning of them, relating them at times to other fairly recent and relevant papal or conciliar teachings, and comparing them with what other commentators on the 1993 document have said about such principles.

Williamson's study begins with a fifteen-page introduction that describes the Biblical Commission, lists the members of it who prepared the text, and sets forth the occasion, purpose, process of composition, and structure of the document, along with a resume; of Pope John Paul II's reception of the Commission's document and approval of it. He notes that this "reception" by the Pope lends the document its authority in the Church and gives extra reason for regarding its principles as 'principles of Catholic interpretation'" (27). After such an introduction, Williamson proposes the twenty principles that he has identified, devoting to each one an individual chapter. A final twelve-page concluding statement assesses the achievement of the Biblical Commission's document, sets an agenda for further discussion, and states what is a challenge for the future.

In identifying each of the twenty principles, Williamson quotes two or three paragraphs or sentences from the Commission's document that formulate the principle, then explains elements in the formulation, and adds a "discussion" of the elements, singling out historical explanations of the topic, problems associated with it, objections or misunderstandings, and often offering examples or clarifications. He also divides the twenty principles into six groups: I. The foundational principle (#1); II. "In human language": Catholic exegesis and human knowledge (#2-5); III. "The Word of God": Catholic Exegesis and Christian Faith (#6-11); IV. The meaning of inspired Scripture (#12-14); V. Methods and Approaches (#15-16); VI. Interpretation in Practice (#17-20). This grouping suits more the thrust of Williamson's argumentation than it does the order of the 1993 document itself.

In my summary of the twenty principles that follows, I am trying to encapsulate all too briefly the essentials of Williamson's presentation. The principles that he has identified are: (1) Sacred Scripture is the word of God expressed in human language: its canonical form is the final stage of that expression, the norm for Church life and theology. (2) In studying that biblical text, Catholic interpretation uses the scientific methods and approaches as objectively as possible to ascertain its true meaning in its literary, socio-cultural, religious, and historical context. (3) Catholic interpretation is concerned with history because Scripture bears witness to a historical reality: God's salvific acts in the past that have meaning for the present, which were recorded by ancient authors in diverse literary genres. (4) Philological and literary analysis are needed to understand fully the message that the ancient human authors intended to communicate. (5) Because biblical interpretation involves an act of human understanding and the subjective attitude of an interpreter, philosophical hermeneutics must inform the interpretation, which requires a fundamental affinity between the interpreter and the object of his study; every "pre-understanding" must be open to correction in its dialogue with the reality of the text, and some

presuppositions are incompatible with the Bible's message. (6) Catholic interpreters approach the biblical text with the presupposition that it mediates to present-day humanity a transcendent reality: God's salvific acts and message, which elicit the response of faith, in the light of which alone they are properly understood with the help of the Spirit. Catholic interpretation is thus part of *fides quaerens intellectum*. (7) The truly adequate context for the interpretation of Scripture is the entire Church, the believing People of God, within which the Bible itself took shape. (8) Catholic exegesis expounds Scripture in continuity with the dynamic pattern of interpretation found with the Bible itself, recognizing the essential unity of the canon of Scripture despite its differing perspectives and array of witnesses, and making use of "relectures". (9) The Old Testament is inspired, faithfully conveys God's self-revelation, and feeds Christians today with a pre-Christian canonical message; it is interpreted in the New Testament in light of the "mystery of Christ", i.e. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, which are recorded with interpretive procedures reflective of a particular time and place. (10) Catholic interpretation exploits the living Tradition of the Church, seeking to be faithful to its transmission of revelation, of which the Bible itself is a witness; within such Tradition the Fathers of the Church have a basic place, but Catholic interpretation is not bound to their exegetical methods. (11) The primary aim of Catholic interpretation is to explain the religious meaning of the Bible, i.e., its meaning as the word that God continues to address to the Church and the world. (12) The literal sense of Scripture is that expressed directly by the inspired human authors, ascertained by a careful analysis of the text within its literary and historical context, including at times its dynamic aspect. (13) The spiritual sense of Scripture, founded on the literal sense, is the meaning expressed in biblical texts read under the Spirit's influence in the context of the paschal mystery and the new life flowing from it. (14) *Sensus Plenior* is the deeper meaning of a text intended by God, but not clearly expressed by the human author, who, guided by the Spirit, chose phrases that would later formulate a truth, the fuller meaning of which was not perceived by that human author, but is recognized in light of other biblical texts or authoritative statements that utilize it. (15) The historical-critical method is the indispensable tool of scientific exegesis to ascertain the literal sense in a diachronic manner, which must be completed by a synchronic study of the final form of the text (the expression of the word of God), and used without presuppositions contrary to Christian faith and with a realization that it is not granted a monopolistic method. (16) Catholic interpretation is open to a plurality of methods (rhetorical, narrative, and semiotic analysis) and approaches based on tradition (canonical, recourse to Jewish interpretive traditions, *Wirkungsgeschichte*), on human sciences (sociology, cultural anthropology, psychology or psychoanalysis), or on certain contemporary contexts (liberationism, feminism); they can yield important insights into the meaning of the biblical text, when they are in harmony with the basic principles guiding Catholic interpretation of the Bible. (17) The task of the Catholic exegete is a work of both scholarship and ecclesial service, which attains its goal when the historical biblical text is explained as God's word addressed to people of today in its christological, canonical, and ecclesial context and in dialogue with other branches of theology, of which Scripture

is “the soul”. (18) Because God’s word in Scripture is still addressed to the Church and the world, its rich meaning, though composed for circumstances of the past, must be actualized, i.e. made pastorally pertinent to life today as related to the mystery of Christ and the Church in a form not heterogeneous to the biblical literal sense. (19) The word of God, which transcends the cultures in which it has been formulated, must be communicated to all human beings in their own cultural contexts, not only through translation, but also through interpretation, the formation of a local Christian culture, and consequent mutual enrichment and discernment. (20) Interpretation occurs in all the ways in which the Church uses the Bible: in the liturgy, *lectio divina*, pastoral ministry (catechesis, homily, biblical apostolate), and ecumenism.

The concluding chapter of the book lists seven achievements of the Biblical Commission’s 1993 document (clarification of the distinctive traits of Catholic interpretation; confirmation but redimensioning of the historical-critical method; incorporation of philosophical hermeneutics; openness to other methods and approaches; rehabilitation of the senses of Scripture; emphasis on the meaning for today; recognition of non-specialist interpretation). It also sets out four points of an agenda for the future (to clarify the implications of the dual nature of Scripture, the nature of biblical theology in the Church, various questions about history and faith, and the relation of Catholic exegesis to the secular academy). Finally, three points state the challenge ahead (to reflect on principles of Catholic interpretation, to be, or not to be, a theological discipline, to make Scripture the spiritual nourishment of the people of God).

An nine-page appendix repeats the twenty principles, which is followed by a valuable thirty-page bibliography, an inadequate index, and a useless ten-page glossary.

Although Williamson succeeds well in the book as a whole in identifying, describing, and discussing the twenty principles of the Catholic interpretation of the Bible which are found in the 1993 document of the Biblical Commission, his discussion raises problems mainly in two areas, which seriously undercut the good effect of his book.

The first problems are encountered in his treatment of the senses of Scripture. What is said about Thomas Aquinas’ understanding of the literal sense is correct: “the literal sense is that which the author intends . . . and the author of Holy Scripture is God . . .” (*ST* 1. q.1 a.10). This then becomes “the divine Author’s intention” (178), when it is set over against the definition of the same sense given by Pope Pius XII in *Divino afflante Spiritu* (#26) as “the human author’s intention”. Here Williamson is restricting Aquinas’ meaning unduly, as if Aquinas were not also speaking of the inspired author. He is aware that a writer like Tábet saw no difference between Pius XII and Aquinas, despite the difference of emphasis in their formulations (178, n. 43). Indeed, later on Williamson himself reluctantly admits the lack of difference (“perhaps”, 212). Then why make so much of the alleged distinction between Aquinas and Pius XII?

Moreover, Williamson quotes me as saying that “spiritual sense” is a “weasel word” because of its lack of precision and frequent abuse (198). Although he correctly cites the Biblical Commission’s definition of it (see #13 above), his discussion of its meaning in various writers and

commentators on the document leaves me with the impression that it is still a weasel word, especially when he says that “the Biblical Commission’s definition of the spiritual sense resembles, in some respects, de Lubac’s description of this sense in the medieval tradition” (199). Again, when Williamson quotes (192-193) the document about the spiritual sense in the New Testament and says that it is not appropriate simply to limit the spiritual sense to a Christian reading of the Old Testament, he himself finally admits the Commission’s use of “spiritual sense” for the religious value of the literal sense of Old Testament texts “uses the term in a different sense than [sic] their definition proposes”.

Finally, I should like to have seen a bit more emphasis given to the famous *proviso* that Pius XII used about the spiritual sense, as he understood it (the christological sense of Old Testament texts). Williamson quotes the passage: “provided it is clearly intended by God” (190, n.6). An analogous remark of Pope John Paul II is also cited (191). The problem is, in the long run, not Williamson’s treatment, but the global formulation of the document itself: “The spiritual sense of Sacred Scripture is the meaning expressed by the biblical texts when read under the influence of the Holy Spirit ...” (191). All biblical texts? All New Testament texts? All Old Testament texts? I still think it’s a weasel word. And the problem gets worse, when one comes to *Sensus Plenior*. Williamson is right in recognizing that the Commission has breathed new life into this sense (210) and that its role remains limited by the controls the Commission stated (211), but his espousal of the wider use of it in the interpretation given by C. Dohmen and especially his conclusion that “considered from this vantage point, the spiritual sense forms a sub-category of the fuller sense” (211) are highly questionable. — No, the use of *sensus plenior* is rightly restricted by the Commission’s document: One finds it only where there is a further biblical text that imposes it on an earlier text, or when a genuine item in the dogmatic Tradition of the Church imposes such a new sense on a biblical text.

The second, and far more problematic area in this book is its treatment of the historical-critical method. This problem is treated not only in the chapter devoted to principle 15 (see above), but in many isolated comments in earlier chapters. The first inkling of the author’s dislike of the method appears in the “impression” quoted in the first paragraph above. When principle 15 is formulated (219), the method is so defined that it is immediately put in its place: “in a diachronic manner” (a reduced quotation from I.A.a, manipulated by I.A.4.g). In his explanation of this principle, Williamson defines it correctly and then relates it properly to the synchronic analysis of the final form of the biblical text.

Moreover he rightly explains the Commission’s distinction (224) between the method itself and the presuppositions with which it can be used: “a method which, when used in an objective manner, implies of itself no *a priori*. If its use is accompanied by *a priori* principles, that is not something pertaining to the method itself, but to the hermeneutical choices which govern the interpretation and can be tendentious” (I.A.4.b). He also recognizes the Commission’s “spirited defense” of the method and notes “the first instance in which a Pope explicitly approved the historical-critical method by name” (228). Furthermore, borrowing from some of my writings the expression, a

“properly oriented” use of the method (230), he uses it and gives it a much fuller comprehension, with which I have no difficulty. Nor do I fault him for any failure to reflect the content of what the document says about the historical-critical method.

Where I differ with Williamson, and not only I, but many other Catholic exegetes who use the historical-critical method, as well as the Biblical Commission itself in this document, has to do with the hermeneutical presuppositions with which the method has been tainted in the past and with which it still is being used by many interpreters today. The Commission recognized that the method is sometimes employed with presuppositions inconsistent with Christian faith. Williamson, however, maintains that the Commission’s evaluation of the method was in this regard “overly positive”: “the *IBC* fails to adequately address the problem of presuppositions in the historical-critical method as it is widely understood and practiced” (237), e.g. in the Jesus Seminar, *Journal of Higher Criticism*, and by followers of F.C. Baur. That a good number of biblical interpreters use the method and exclude all considerations of faith, reject miracles, or practise it solely in a historicist sense, even some Catholics, I gladly concede. But that it is not per se neutral and cannot yield objective results, I deny. The extreme of Williamson’s negative reaction is found in his concluding chapter, when he speaks of “the presuppositions and biases intrinsic to the method itself” (329). In taking that position, he is simply wrong.

Williamson gives a good summary of seven of the steps that the method normally employs (222). But I am puzzled. I find among them none of the presuppositions or biases that are said to vitiate the method intrinsically. Why cannot those seven steps be used with a “properly exercised pre-understanding of faith” striving “to be as objective as possible” (275)? Would such a pre-understanding compromise the autonomy of these steps of the scientific biblical discipline?

I am aware that I am criticizing a book for which the former secretary of the Biblical Commission has written the preface. The historical-critical method is mentioned only once in the fifth paragraph of that preface, along with the comment, “which is indispensable but not exclusive”. There is, however, not a remark in that preface about the author’s disagreement with the Commission’s own evaluation of that method, which “holds pride of place in the Commission’s estimation” (21).

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ISSN 0006-0887

This periodical is indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Flr., Chicago, IL 60606.

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PIETRO BOCCACCIO, Direttore Responsabile

Autorizz. Tribunale di Roma n. 6229 del 24-3-1958 del Reg. della Stampa



Associato all'Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana

Finito di stampare il 30 ottobre 2002

Tip.: Ist. Salesiano Pio XI - Via Umbertide, 11 - 00181 Roma